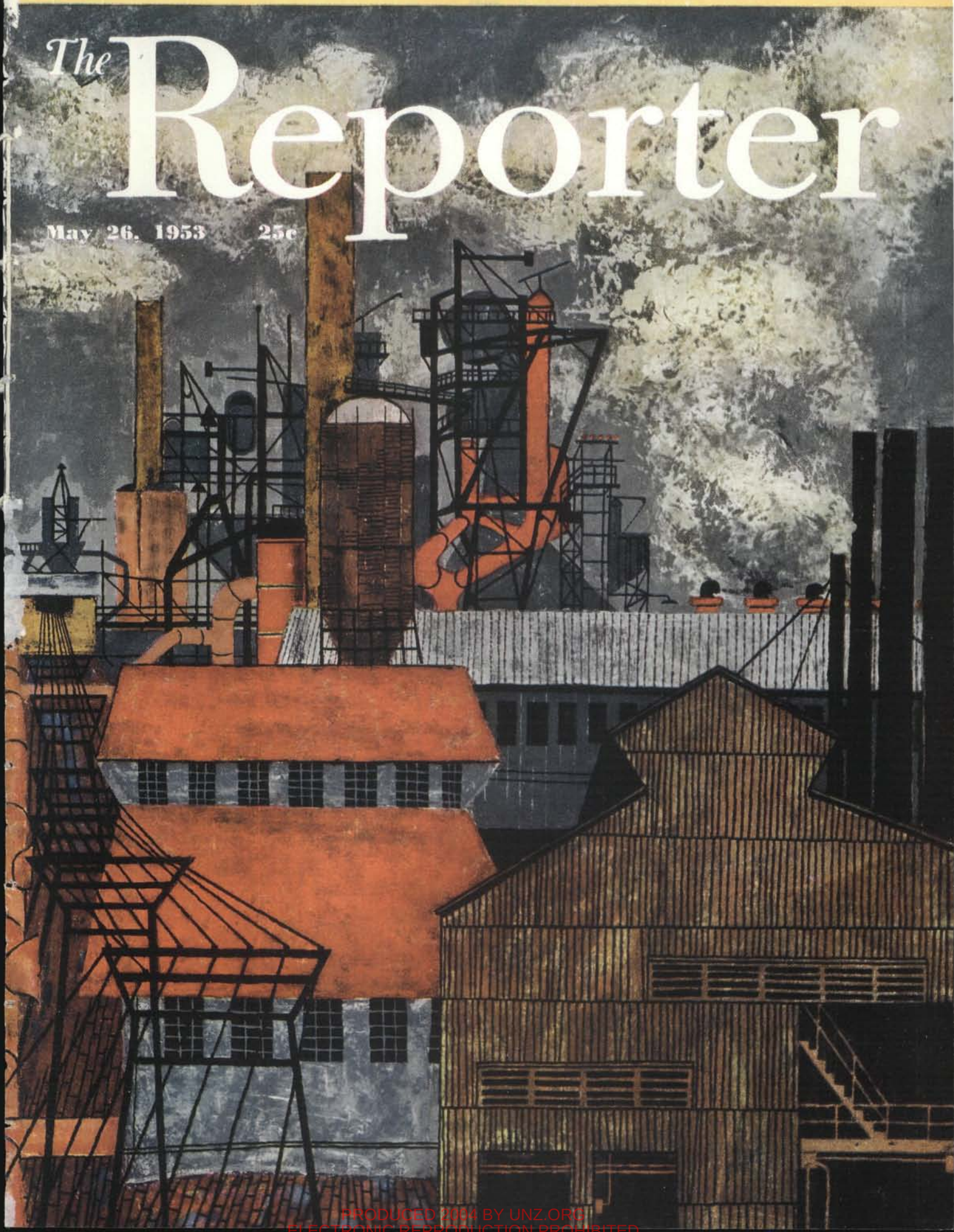
The Challenge of Soviet Economic Growth

The Reporter

May 26, 1953 25c



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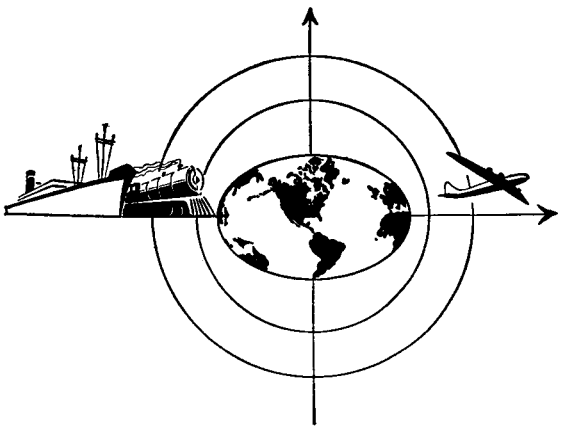

The Reporter's Notes

Sent to the Cleaners

The South Koreans at least were frank about it: They were going to be very careful about any South Koreans the Communists released. They were going to do some "brain rewashing" of their own. "It will take some time," the ROK Defense Minister announced, "before they see or have correspondence with their families. We have a plan to re-educate them over a period of six months."

The British were wise about it, confident: The War Office policy was to send returned prisoners to their homes whether or not they have been influenced by Communist propaganda.

The U.S. Army authorities who sent the twenty-three American soldiers to Valley Forge Hospital were not frank about it, or wise, or even coherent. The soldiers defended themselves; public opinion will defend them; but they should never have been put in the position of needing to defend themselves or be defended.

When American soldiers who have suffered in enemy prison camps come home they do not come home as immigrants. No one can require them to fill out questionnaires; no McCarran Act applies to them; their past is their password. That is the way this nation feels about them.

Foreign Aid

A package bill for foreign aid has now gone to Congress. The paper and ribbons are new, but when Messrs. Wiley, Bridges, Vorys, and Taber have torn the wrappings off, the contents are going to look very much like last year's Christmas present. It's a safe bet that too much time and energy will be spent, by Congressmen and Administration witnesses alike, in arguing whether and to what extent this year's aid is like last year's aid.

The Administration is hoist either way: It can't admit that the aid bill is the crowning achievement of a Truman-Eisenhower foreign policy, and it can't make a convincing case that a real break has been made with the past. Indeed, the Administration may mar its presentation of an essentially sound aid program by overdoing the effort to make it look as if there is no continuity with what its predecessors were doing.

Secretary Dulles has spoken of a big shift of aid from Europe to the Far East. What is really proposed is mostly more aid for the French budget (just like last year and the year before) so that the French can keep up their fight in Indo-China. This much-needed budgetary support to the Paris government is a flexible device: It can be called aid to France, or aid to the prospective European army, or aid to Indo-China. No matter what this aid is called, it will go into the same French budget, and the French will spend about the same amount (the equivalent of a billion and a quarter dollars) on Indo-China.

The effort to make things look new extends even to NATO strategy. About a year and a half ago, NATO began to veer away from the idea of planning its build-up on the assumption of an attack in 1954, and adopted instead a procedure for a continuous build-up, planning three years ahead.

President Eisenhower, who favored this kind of a change at the time, has now adopted the same idea in his own military budgeting: ". . . a very real danger not only exists this year, but may continue to exist for years to come." This is fine, but does it have to be done by leaving the impression that there is no continuity with the past? Does every proposal to Congress have to be wrapped in the swaddling cloth of a "new" Republican idea, reversing a long history of strategic stupidities by Democrats? This is not likely to fool the Republican foreign-policy leaders in Congress, who know better. But it could deepen the growing worry of Congressional Democrats that the President may damage his foreign policy by placing Republican unity above bipartisanship in foreign policy.

Self-Service

Speaking of NATO reminds us of the time when a Defense Department official went before a Senate committee last year to talk about "infrastructure," that NATO word for fixed military installations like airfields, roads, and barracks. After explaining that the United States would pay a very large proportion of the total bill for these facilities, the witness pointed out that some land and buildings for airfields would be contributed by the "host country." The chairman interrupted him with a roar of bitter and uncontrollable mirth. "Did you say 'host' country?" he boomed. "Isn't that like being invited to a duck dinner if we'll bring our own duck?"

New Worlds to Conquer

In a new extension of his domain, Senator McCarthy appears to be muscling in on the quasi-judicial functions of the Federal Communications Commission. The FCC has

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for some time been considering two applications for a single TV channel in Milwaukee—one from the Hearst radio interests and the other from a vocational school.

Last January, members of the Commission began receiving letters from Senator McCarthy and other Wisconsin Republican Congressmen urging approval of the Hearst application. One reason presumably was that a grant to Hearst would relieve the television monopoly currently enjoyed in Milwaukee by the *Journal,* which is unsympathetic to Senator McCarthy.

The Commission replied to these letters courteously and at length, but on April 1 it again rejected the Hearst interests' petition. This put the vocational school's application in line for action.

At this time the Commission Chairman, Paul Walker, a Democrat, was about to be succeeded in the chairmanship by a Republican. Eugene Merrill, a Truman lame-duck appointee, was awaiting replacement by a Republican who had already been appointed but not yet sworn in. (He was actually replaced a few days later.) Both Walker and Merrill had voted against the Hearst petition. Both were reportedly sympathetic to the vocational school's application. On Saturday, April 11, McCarthy summoned the two Commissioners to the Hill for the following Monday morning to discuss the Milwaukee situation.

Several members of the Committee staff but no other Senators were present. After some preliminary discussion, the Senator said he'd like to make some notes. A stenotypist was called in. The two Commissioners were then put under oath and closely questioned by McCarthy about the Hearst and vocational-school applications. It was impressed on them that it would be unwise to take any action on this application before the new Chairman was sworn in.

At the close of the meeting, Walker requested a copy of the transcript. Why, of course, the Senator said. Several days later, upon inquiry, the Commission was advised by the Senator's office that unfortunately the stenotypist was green and had made such a jumble of the record that the Senator felt it could serve no useful purpose. This was not surprising. As one official put it: "If that transcript were made fully public, decent people would be up in arms. The proceeding was as if a member of the Judiciary Committee were instructing a judge how to act on a pending case."

Shoe on Other Foot Dep't.

Nothing enlivens a Congressional hearing quite as much as the spectacle of a politician eating past words to promote a future career. We have just come by an unofficial transcript of the hearings held a few weeks ago by the Senate Judiciary Committee, which was considering the confirmation of former Senator Harry Cain (R., Washington) as Chairman of the Subversive Activities Control Board. Cain was defeated for re-election last November by Senator Henry M. ("Scoop") Jackson.

Senator Thomas Carey Hennings, Jr. (D., Missouri) produced the transcript of what Cain had said when he was leading the fight against the confirmation of former Governor Mon Wallgren of Washington to be Chairman of the National Security Resources Board: "Whether for just cause or not, the citizens of Washington State repudiated Mr. Wallgren, the man whose name is before you for an infinitely more powerful portfolio than that of governor of his own or any other state. Charges of mismanagement, inefficiency, and a lack of capacity were registered against Mr. Wallgren by almost 450,000 men and women of Washington State. I share their concern and their distress that one whom they have turned out in a free election is now being nominated for an assignment which will so surely affect their future."

HENNINGS: You did imply . . . that you applied the yardstick of a popular election to Mr. Wallgren's qualifications when he had been nominated. I believe in your state the majority of the present Senator who prevailed in the last election was 134,000 and that General Eisenhower, now President Eisenhower, carried the State of Washington by 106,000 votes, more or less.

CAIN: I said a great many other things which I believed then . . . The basis of my contention against the gentleman in question, and I make no personal reference to him, was that he was unqualified to fill a particular job, and that he had associated, through a number of years, with a number of citizens, the loyalty of some being questionable. . . . Later, when he was nominated for the Federal Power Commission, I took no serious steps . . . it did not follow that prejudice would prevail upon me to oppose him in any sturdy way for positions which I thought him to be qualified for. . . .

HENNINGS: I just wondered, Senator, whether, since that seemed to be one of your principal and determining factors in your armament of objections to Mr. Wallgren—that is to say, the yardstick of the election in his own state—whether you now think that is a yardstick which should be applied in determining your qualifications for this [SACB] position to which you have been nominated.

CAIN: [The National Security Resources Board] . . . was, as I saw it, to be the second most important job, second only to the Presidency itself in the United States . . .

HENNINGS: Now, Senator, I take it that you don't believe the Subversive Activities Control Board is any less an important post than the National Security Resources Board, do you?

CAIN: No, sir, I think it takes qualifications and the capacity of a different kind. . . .

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WHO— WHAT— WHY—

THE United Nations published, not long ago, a fat book full of numbers entitled *Economic Survey of Europe Since the War.* Though it will never be a best seller, it is one of the important books of our generation. For it brings together, in grim juxtaposition, the known facts about production in the Soviet Union and that in western Europe. Soviet production can do much more than form an industrial base for military aggression. Russia's economic *élan* is among those few contemporary facts—the atom is another—which produce a pervading sense of great seriousness at meetings of our National Security Council.

Believing that the decisions of the National Security Council will work only if the basis for them is understood by the people at large, we asked our chief European correspondent to round up the facts about Soviet growth and the reaction to them in western Europe. The result is **Theodore H. White's** "The Challenge of Soviet Economic Growth."

We forwarded this article to **J. K. Galbraith,** Professor of Economics at Harvard, a frequent contributor to *The Reporter,* who gives us a reaction to Mr. White's facts. We would welcome other reactions. Are we wrong in feeling that both the United States and its friends abroad need to redouble their efforts to find the key to more rapid and better-balanced growth?

WHILE brooding about these serious matters, it may help the layman to know that the economists don't guess right all the time, or even most of the time. **J. A. Livingston,** who tackles the question "How Wrong Can Economists Be?", has been querying economists about their forecasts for several years. His conclusions are revealing, but not as dangerous to the economic profession as one might think; there is little evidence that past experience with wrong guesses dampens the enthusiasm of forecasters for trying again. Mr. Livingston, financial editor of the Philadelphia *Bulletin,* served in the research and statistics division of the War Production Board and later on the economic staff of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion. He knows whereof he speaks.

SPECIAL SECTION ON McCARRAN'S NEVADA

We have long been interested in finding out what kind of a society it is that produces and endorses such Senators as McCarran and Malone. What kind of place is Nevada? In our next issue we shall present some facts about the state and about those who have tried to buck McCarran's power.

WE WERE happy to receive from Rome the balanced commentary that appears in this issue on the difficulties our new Ambassador to Italy must face as an American representative and as a woman. **Marina Vittoria Rossetti,** a leader of Catholic Action in Italy and an official in the Pax Romana organization for Catholic intellectuals, is well qualified to write about her nation's religion and politics.

Sometimes what is not happening, and the reason why, make a really important story. This is the case with our negotiations with Franco's Spain, which have been going on for two years with no apparent results. Our correspondent **Theodore Draper** tells why.

ONCE A YEAR the cherry blossoms bloom in Washington, a delight to the eye; every spring, also, it is Taber season in the capital, when the Representative from New York's 36th District rides high as chief knife wielder of the House Appropriations Committee. Our report on Mr. Taber's current spring activities comes from **H. H. Harris,** public-relations director of the American Federation of Technical Engineers, an affiliate of the AFL.

Our Washington Editor, **Douglass Cater,** takes a look at the Democrats and at the uses they are making of adversity. How are they reorienting and regrouping themselves now that they are no longer in the limelight? Readers can count on the subject's being followed up in future issues.

EVERYONE KNOWS what it is to sit down to write a letter and find that the words simply do not come. It is a dreadful experience, and it is comforting to discover, by reading **William Saroyan's** amusing confession in this issue, that frustration can befall even a writer who has produced so much and so well as Mr. Saroyan.

As a step toward giving more and more complete coverage of the popular arts, we asked **Harold Lawrence** to explain the effect long-playing records have had in their field. Composer, musical consultant, and lecturer, Mr. Lawrence, who studied piano and composition in Paris, is director of recorded music at WQXR, the radio station of the New York *Times.*

Our cover is by **Robert Mumford.** Last summer in Provincetown he built a shack out of driftwood and beachcombed with his wife, an artist's model who is also his agent. In New York he paints by day, drives a taxicab by night. Who said artists were a lazy lot?

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HARLAN CLEVELAND

The Uses of Initiative

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S foreign-policy speech of a month ago, surviving the ponderous efforts of his Secretary of State to interpret it, recaptured for us that elusive thing called the initiative. What do we do with it?

For too many years, we have linked to the cold war just about everything we have been trying to do in the world. Because of the implacable hostility of Stalin, the succession of Indo-Chinas and Czechoslovakias and Koreas, military security has obsessed our thoughts, swollen our national budget, and pre-empted the time and energy of our diplomatic negotiators. The Marshall Plan and the Point Four Program were justified to Congress principally as "weapons," and we forgot General Marshall's dictum that "our policy is not directed against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos."

So now the prospect of co-existence with a less frantically aggressive Communist neighbor threatens to throw us off stride. We are not organized for peace.

CONTRARY to what statesmen like to imply in speeches, our foreign policy is made mostly by events rather than by "policymakers." In the second half of the twentieth century, what statesmen do is conditioned by four great events of the first half. Only one of these events is centered in the Kremlin.

The biggest of all has been the emergence of that massive unit of production which is the American capitalist economy. With seven per cent of the world's people, we produce more than forty per cent of all the goods and services the world turns out.

Event number two has been the progressive weakening of Europe, made inevitable by two stubborn realities. One is the fact that people expect rapid change for the better in their standard of living, and demand that their governments produce it for them. The other is Europe's disappointingly low rate of economic growth. Europe has been losing its productivity race with us for a long time, as the chart on page 15 shows. This is why the Europeans have been trying to create a "single market" in Europe—and, beyond that, a European Federal Union. Up to now, the single market is far from being realized.

The third event is the ferment among what used to be called the "backward peoples" of the world, notably in Asia. Their new economic expectations, linked to the drive for political freedom from colonial rule, have made the "underdeveloped areas" a separate force that the rest of the world must reckon with for the first time in modern history.

President Truman's 1949 Inaugural Address and President Eisenhower's April 16 speech are at one in recognizing this and in proposing a broad program of economic development.

The final great event, which has shaped so much of our policy in recent years, was the marriage of Soviet power to the Kremlin's aggressive intentions. We have come to think of this threat in military terms: four million men under arms, plus as many more in satellite armies. Yet, if by any chance we are entering an age of co-existence, what counts most is Russia's remarkable rate of growth. The total output of the Soviet Union appears to be growing at the rate of nine or ten per cent a year, compared with three or four per cent here in the United States and only one or two per cent now in most of the major countries of western Europe. On this showing, have we who glorify the word "dynamic" somehow become the world's second most dynamic economy?

With these facts in focus, the dinner-party guessing game about Malenkov's intentions shrinks to a part, and not even the most important part, of what we need to make policy about. The most urgent part, in fact, lies right on our Atlantic doorstep.

The Revival of Neutralism

Since the beginning of last year the signs of disintegration within the Atlantic community have been plain. Just as the European army and the European political community reached the point of decision, they were blocked by a rising tide of nationalistic doubts and hesitations, especially in France. The upward curve of production nearly flattened out during the last twelve months, adding a pygmy one per cent to western Europe's total output. Our European partners in NATO began a stubborn campaign of resistance to big increases in military effort. A

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frustrated American official captured the mood when he said, "They don't think they can afford to survive."

Secretary Dulles, over General Ridgway's demurrer, has now agreed to a military "stretch-out"—a popular euphemism for "cutback." But long before the formal decision, our NATO partners were making a cutback inevitable. Britain and Germany announced plans to cut taxes—especially taxes on business. The U.S. Congress has a similar urge, for similar reasons. So our mutual defense arrangements are at this moment slipping into a mutual complacency that conveniently produces mutual tax cuts.

As part of this disintegration, that hardy anachronism which Americans call isolationism and Europeans call neutralism is on the rise again. On the Continent and even in the United Kingdom, there is a growing recognition that small national states cannot cope with the rigorous military and economic burdens of the twentieth century. These small states —"small" in a world where the pragmatic standard of size is set by the United States and the Soviet Union—face the multiple challenge of the Red Army, U.S. industry, and the tearing away of rich colonial hinterlands. They face, too, the devastating political challenge of being unable, because of their individual economic and military weakness, to act as real partners of the United States in the making of policy.

In earlier postwar years, nationalist utterances were bad form among the western Allies. Now each major country of the Atlantic community has a vociferous minority which purveys a rancid and negative kind of nationalism, attacks its government's attempts to get continental Europe unified and the Atlantic alliance working, but has no realistic alternative policy to propose. Gaullists and some Socialists in France, the Social Democratic leaders in Germany, neo-Fascists and Nenni Socialists in Italy, and Bevanites in Britain are singing, if not in unison, at least in close harmony—and the resulting noise goes very well with the melodies from Moscow.

The Need for Permanence

In short, the Atlantic alliance and indeed the whole structure of American postwar policy in Europe—which President Eisenhower has wisely preserved as his own—is in trouble. This is bad trouble, for the Atlantic community is the political heart, the military backbone, and the economic muscles of the free world. Here is more than three-quarters of the industrial power and the great bulk of the military power of the non-Communist world. Here are the peoples who, despite their differences, are the common bearers of the great western traditions and values. It is this group of peoples, bound together now mainly by a military alliance, that must provide the necessary economic support, military protection, and political leadership to all of the non-Communist nations.

So when we speak of organizing for peace, the facts of our world tell us to start by organizing the Atlantic community.

What do we mean, organize? Committees and boards and councils will not stop bullets or make factories hum. Yet it is imperative that we now find practical ways to associate the United States more closely with Britain and the Continent in political and economic matters. European union cannot be created by threats of nonsupport. It will not be born now unless the continental Europeans feel that they are enveloped in a close *and permanent* association with both the British and us. The British and the continentals will not be able to generate a satisfactory rate of economic growth—short of massive and continuing subsidies from the U.S. Treasury—until they have the assurance of ready *and permanent* access to the broad market and dependable source of food and raw materials that the United States and Canada can provide.

ONE FIRST STEP would be for the United States to join the Organization for European Economic Cooperation. This agency could, with fuller participation by the United States and Canada, become an Atlantic body responsible for getting agreement on hard-headed solutions to the trade restrictions and currency shortages that continue to divide the free world and hold back rapid economic growth.

Another first step would be to bring into being an Atlantic Assembly, modeled roughly on the Council of Europe, which would bring together the members of parliaments and congresses of the Atlantic nations and provide a place where the State of the Community could be discussed freely by responsible legislators on the basis of reports from NATO (on military matters) and from an Atlantic economic organization. The political and technical problems involved in setting up such an assembly of parliamentarians would be many and complex, but the sense of solidarity that could develop in such a forum would be well worth the months of tedious negotiations it would require.

BEFORE, during, and since our election campaign, we have waited too long for something to turn up, for Soviet intentions to be clarified. Instead of waiting, we need to use our recaptured initiative to tackle major tasks like these, which flow from the objective facts about our world, not from expert interpretations of the latest smile on the face of the tiger.

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CORRESPONDENCE

ACTION ON THE ASTIN CASE

To the Editor: Your May 12 editorial note "Science and Politics" ends with the question: "Perhaps we don't read the newspapers carefully enough—but what has the National Science Foundation done in the cases of Dr. Astin and Mr. Day?"

So far as we have been able to determine, no person on the staff of *The Reporter* called the Foundation, in advance of writing the piece, to learn what it had done.

The Foundation is an agency of the Executive Branch available to Government for advice and assistance in matters of science. What it does in such advisory capacity is not a matter that would ordinarily form the subject of a press release.

The Foundation has been deeply concerned over the possible effect of the Astin case upon the morale and effectiveness of hundreds of excellent and dedicated Government scientists. It immediately offered to assist in every way possible. It is in full accord with the appointment of the independent investigating committees of scientists.

The Foundation hopes that the course of careful, objective study and action now agreed upon will lead to constructive settlement of the important issues raised.

PAUL E. KLOPSTEG
Associate Director
National Science Foundation
Washington

A NEW EUROPE

To the Editor: I have read "A New Europe Comes to Life," by Theodore H. White (*The Reporter,* April 28), with much interest and sincerely hope that his restrained optimism is justified by events. I know of nothing that is more important to the survival of the western countries than the federation of Europe. I have long endeavored to promote this movement, but of course there is little an American can do.

I think Mr. White's piece is very well done, and I hope it will be read very widely in this country.

J. W. FULBRIGHT
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington

SUBSIDIES SPEED THE PLOW

To the Editor: J. K. Galbraith's article on farm price supports (*The Reporter,* April 14) is intellectualized farm-lobby sentimentality. Standing on the hackneyed argument that since farm prices fluctuate the farmer must be subsidized, Mr. Galbraith ignores the interest of the nation as a whole in maximizing its total wealth and substitutes for the national interest the interest of an organized faction. I am prepared to write an article for *The Reporter* maintaining that attorneys with less than five years' practice should be guaranteed a minimum yearly wage because of the large investment and great risk involved. (I happen to be a young attorney.)

I am not a Republican but I despise the intellectually shabby argument that since the Administration is faced with the hard facts, it must dispose of its theoretical position. Mr. Galbraith should differentiate between political and economic facts. The hard fact is that politically farmers are organized and must be given preferential treatment. Mr. Galbraith's article is sophistry—a supposedly economic justification of a political reality.

MYRON T. MURRAY
Dayton, Ohio

PRAISE INDEED

To the Editor: The art of compression, which all English newspapermen have had to learn, is practically unknown in this country. Accordingly it was a pleasure to note that the two best pieces in your April 28 issue were the shortest—Bill Mauldin's classic "The Silencing of Douglas MacFleet" and Gouverneur Paulding's review of Santayana's *My Host the World.* I haven't read the book; I have read enough else of Santayana (and of Paulding) to assume that he represents it correctly; but even if he hasn't it was a damn good piece of writing.

None of this of course is any reflection on good long stories.

ELMER DAVIS
Washington

IT WAS NO SECRET

To the Editor: Allen Raymond's article on Mexico (*The Reporter,* March 31) conveys an impression which I am sure both Mr. Raymond and *The Reporter* will wish to correct. Mr. Raymond discusses at some length a "confidential report" on the Mexican economy which he says "has never been made public, possibly because it predicts that the pace of industrial and commercial progress in Mexico will not be as swift in the next ten years as it has been in the last ten."

The report was, in fact, made public by the Mexican authorities nearly six months before Mr. Raymond's article appeared. The document in question is a study of the Mexican economy completed last September by an international working party composed of a staff member of Mexico's Nacional Financiera, a staff member of the Banco de Mexico, and two staff members of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The Mexican authorities released the study to the press in Mexico last October, and accounts of it appeared for several days running at that time. Completion of the report was announced in Washington by the International Bank on October 17. The text was made available to correspondents in Washington who requested it, and accounts of it then appeared in the press in the United States and elsewhere.

A verbatim text of the study appears in the July-September 1952 number of *Problemas Agricolas e Industriales de Mexico,* an economic review published in Mexico City. The Spanish text is being published in book form for the Mexican Government by the Fondo de Cultura Económica. An English-language edition of the study is being published for the International Bank by the Johns Hopkins Press this April.

HAROLD N. GRAVES, JR.
Director of Public Relations
International Bank
for Reconstruction and Development
Washington

'JOY OF SELF-EXPRESSION'

To the Editor: Many irate and new-found friends have brought to my attention the article in your issue of April 28 by Marya Mannes condemning my popular television show entitled "You Can Paint Originals" with the Connie Gordon method and materials.

It's rather unfortunate that Marya Mannes did not realize the basic force and the great interest aroused by my method of teaching painting to complete beginners. My demonstrations are primarily to arouse the interest of those who seek an expression but who have an innate fear to begin. If my method succeeds in removing the barriers and hidden capsules of fear in those who want to paint, then I have amply succeeded in my task of assuring the interested public that they "too" can paint. The hundreds of letters which pour in weekly as a result of the TV show fully confirm this conviction.

There is not the intent to create "Rembrandts," as Marya Mannes asserts, through this simple beginner's method, but there is the profound and noble purpose to make active participation in art and self-expression available to all without labor pains.

Did you ever see the enlightened face of a "first painting" student? Did you ever witness the joy and satisfaction of sharing the delight of one who has created an original oil painting—getting results with the first attempts? This joy of self-expression is a human quality not to be restrained but to be encouraged.

To listen to music or look at art is a mundial joy, but for those who participate there is a deeper personal satisfaction and understanding of what makes good music or art. The study of music does not guarantee another Beethoven, Mozart, or Goodman . . .

I hope that my efforts to arouse the public to take an active part in creating original oil paintings by my simple, logical method will continue to directly reward the participant—not only through immediate results but also through realization of what makes "Fine Art."

CONSTANCE GORDON
New York

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The Challenge of Soviet Economic Growth

THEODORE H. WHITE

IN THE perspective of history, events that seem like miracles and disasters are simply the sum of a thousand almost unnoticed changes erupting in a climax that shatters old and fragile assumptions to bits. A disaster, it appears, may now be in the making; within twenty years it may become one of the world's dominant political facts unless the western world organizes itself immediately for an effort more imaginative than any it has yet undertaken. The nature of this possible disaster is political, not military.

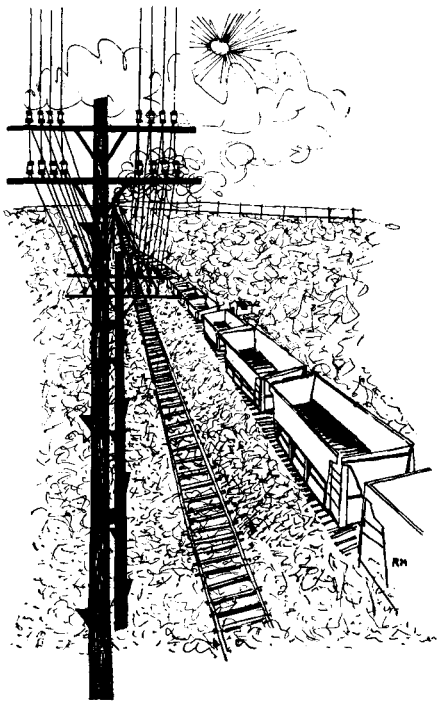
The military potential of Soviet industry is, to be sure, enormous. With a machine-tool capacity more than double that of 1944 and a steel production nearly three times as great, Soviet arms capacity must be at present at least twice as large as that of the last war year, when Russia produced, among other armaments: forty thousand aircraft; more than thirty thousand tanks, self-propelled guns, and armored cars; over three million rifles; two million tommy guns; 450,000 machine guns; and 120,000 heavier guns.

But it is not this military threat which is important. The western world already possesses the capacity to match and overmatch this potential any time in the next thirty years. In this atomic age such measures can make us powerful but cannot make us safe.

THE political threat of Soviet productive capacity is more important, more insidious, and more difficult to deal with.

Up to now, in the political rivalry of Communism and freedom, freedom has been sold to western Europe not only as a good in itself but as a more fruitful way of acquiring the comforts of life. Since the Bolshevik Revolution, the spread of Communism has been countered by the knowledge that the Russian citizen exists at a standard of living so low as to make a western worker, even one on unemployment relief, seem comfortable by comparison.

While this has been true in the past, and while the gap between western and Soviet standards of living is still huge, it now lies within the power of the Soviet rulers to wipe out the discrepancy in another decade. Any projection of the current growth curves of production in the Soviet Union and western Europe shows them meeting and intersecting at some point between 1960 and 1970. If this statistical intersection becomes apparent in the material goods available to ordinary citizens, the politics of Europe may change as a tide changes. If comparative poverty becomes the price of freedom, freedom will obviously lose an immeasurable part of its political appeal.



Wrestling with Ghosts

The growth of the Soviet economy has not, until recently, played a great part in European political thinking. But within a five-month period stretching roughly from the Communist approval of the fifth Five-Year Plan last October to the great economic survey of the Economic Commission for Europe published in February, it has suddenly become one of the most significant imponderables in the rethinking of western strategy that has been going on in several of the most important capitals of western Europe. This rethinking—heightened by whatever shreds of information are available since Stalin's death and Malenkov's swift peace offensive—holds that a western strategy frozen and limited to NATO's rigid military objectives is badly and narrowly conceived. The threat of Russia, according to this thinking, is not primarily military; it is political, and rests upon the dynamic attraction of Russian economic expansion.

Whoever grapples with Russian statistics is like a man wrestling with ghosts. Figures printed by the Russians, though usually accurate, are at once symbolic and misleading. Categories of goods shift from column to column, from plan to plan, as fancy or the changing principles of Russian accounting dictate. Successes are highlighted; failures can be traced only by groping in the areas of statis-

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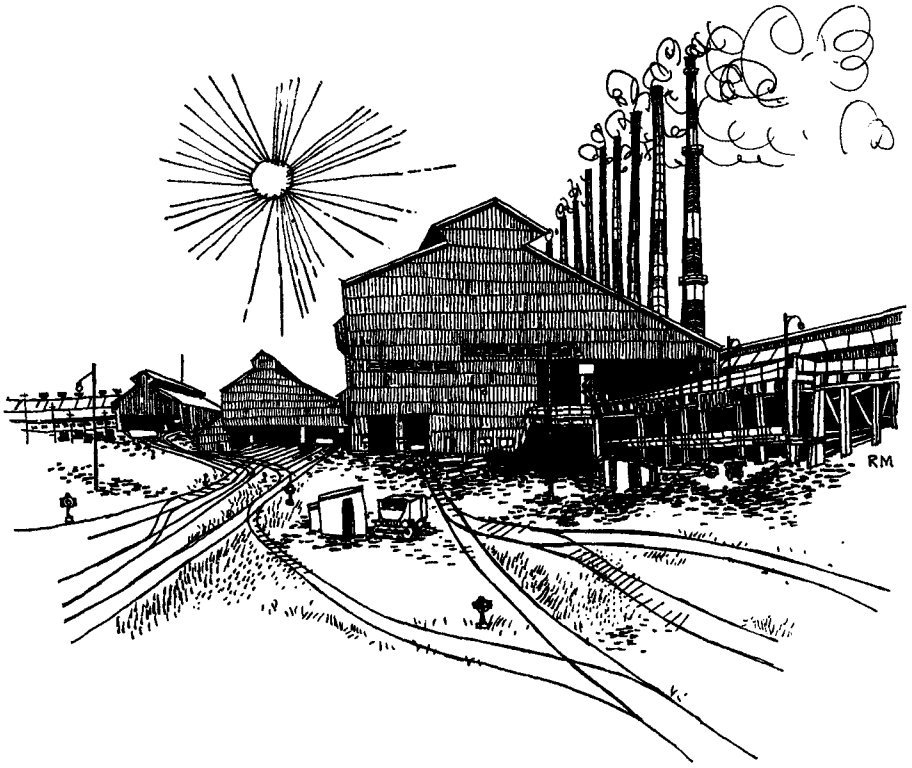

tical silence or by assessing patches of criticism in provincial Russian papers.

To calculate production in volume, weight, and tonnage, western economists must become statistical detectives. They must start with the percentage figures that are the sole present public measure of progress in Russia and adjust them for current volume by reaching back to the last available figures on absolute production. At present, most western economists must adjust Russian percentages from the base year 1941 because 1941 is the last year for which absolute figures are available.

In that year, during the German invasion of Russia, the Wehrmacht captured a bound volume of secret Russian production figures which, after the defeat of Hitler, the U.S. Army seized, photostated, and made available to world economists. But with each passing year even these 1941 figures become more difficult to use, for the Russians, with every new Five-Year Plan, reduce the area of observation necessary for judgment.

One of Europe's most authoritative official researchers into Russian affairs took me to his bookshelves to illustrate the problem. "Here is the first Five-Year Plan," he said, and showed me two fat volumes. The second Five-Year Plan, by its side, consisted of one fat volume. The third Five-Year Plan was one thin book. The fourth Five-Year Plan was a tiny pamphlet. The current Five-Year Plan he lifted out of a folder—one sheet of Russian newspaper and that was all.

DESPITE this obscurity, certain gross facts are now obvious. By 1955 (the end of the current Five-Year Plan), Russia will be approaching western Europe in most major categories of production and will have surpassed it in at least one—petroleum. By 1960, according to the calculations of United Nations economists, Russia will be fully equal in basic industrial production to western Europe and will have surpassed it dramatically in several critical sectors.

Western Europe—France, Italy, Germany, Britain, and the Low Countries—is a population bloc of 207 million people; this is almost the same as the population of the Soviet Union. In 1951 the Soviet Union produced only about half as much coal (281 million tons against 530 million tons), three-fifths as much steel (31 million tons against 51 million tons) and a little more than half as much electricity (103 billion kilowatt-hours against 196 billion kilowatt-hours) as western Europe. There is still a great gap between the two; the drama arises from the spectacular stride and rhythm of Russian production.

Since 1940, the Russians have almost doubled their production of coal (up from 166 million tons a year to 301 million tons), steel (up from 18 million tons to 35 million tons), and oil (up from 31 million tons to 47 million tons); they have done even better with electric power (from 48 billion kilowatt-hours to 117 billion kilowatt-hours). This increase, it should be stressed, is the increase only as measured against the best Russian records of prewar years. The actual increase of Soviet production since the war has been much greater than this because before the Russians could reach these peaks they were forced to repair devastation greater than that in any other nation except Germany.

This rhythm is ominous in itself. Set against the pattern of development in western Europe, it is more ominous still.

The Treadmill

Western Europe's development since the war has been quite substantial—swifter than at any time since the late Victorian decades. But measured against Russian production, these efforts are almost negligible. The British, for example, are the greatest coal-producing power of western Europe. They were never invaded. Yet they have not yet recovered their prewar level of production and, after seven years of desperate effort, they have now set as the target of their efforts—*to be reached over a period of twelve years*—an increase of 20 million tons annually. Since 1950, *in a two-year period,* the Russians have increased their coal production by 40 million tons. The great steelmaking powers of western Europe—Britain, France, Benelux, and Germany—with all the aid and prodding of the Marshall Plan have succeeded in adding only 12 million tons of new steel to their economy since the war. The Russians have added almost twice that amount since the war, and plan almost to double their present total by the end of this decade.

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Perhaps the most disconcerting factor of all in the comparison of Russia and western Europe is the present leveling off—or stagnation—of industry in every western European country but Germany. Cotton-cloth production in western Europe (much of it for export) stood at 987,000 tons in 1951. The Russian plan calls for 737,000 tons by 1955 and catching up with western Europe by 1960. Coal production in western Europe was 530 million tons in 1951 as against a planned Russian production of 372 million tons in 1955 and an estimated 500 million tons in 1960. Steel production in western Europe was 51 million tons in 1951; Russian plans call for 60 million tons by 1960, and at the Russians' present rhythm they will reach that target a year early.

Oil production has always been considered the Achilles' heel of Russian production—but our intelligence services inform us of a vast Russian postwar oil strike in the Ural-Volga region, equivalent in riches to the Kuwait oil field of the Middle East. This new field gave the Russians 18 million tons of oil last year alone and has caused the most important upward adjustment of Russia's postwar planning. In the immediate postwar period, Stalin set Russia's goal as only 60 million tons of oil by 1960; the sights have now been lifted to 70 million by 1955.

To reduce these broad and fuzzy figures to the direct comparisons which arouse political emotion, one must divide western Europe into its component parts and peoples. The 207 million people of western Europe are not a homogeneous conglomerate. Britain has a standard of living perhaps double that of France; Germany has a rhythm of expansion of its own which sets it, for the moment, beyond immediate political infection by Communism. The weak sisters in western Europe are Italy and France, and these, with their enormous Communist Parties, are politically the most vulnerable to Russian economic demonstration.

During the past winter, several French analysts and statisticians have prepared comparisons between their own productive system and the Soviets'. All these analyses start, as they must, with the fact that French expansion has leveled off and that France's 1951 achievements are (except for electricity) semi-permanent levels unless the French government whips the nation into another domestic drive as inspired as the first Monnet Plan.

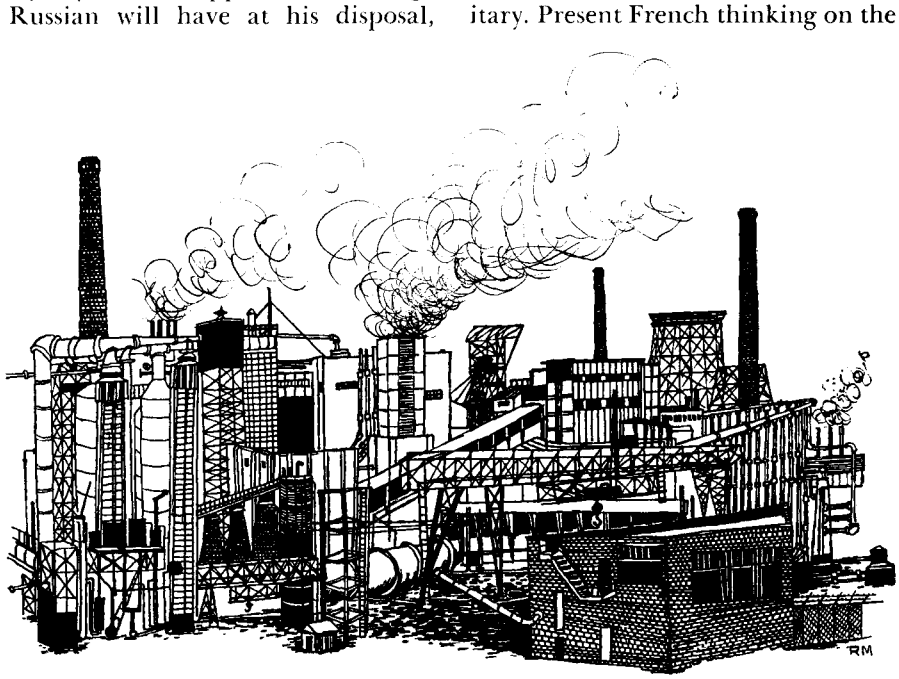
Here are some of the politically explosive comparisons: By 1955, coal production in the Soviet Union will come to 1,384 kilograms per person as against 1,350 kilograms per person in France. Steel production by 1955 will come to 206 kilograms a head in the Soviet Union as against 232 kilograms a head in France. But since France must export about twenty-five per cent of its steel to pay for essential imports while the Soviet Union consumes all its steel at home, per capita consumption of steel in the Soviet Union will be higher. France in 1955 will still retain a slight lead in per capita production of electricity—850 kilowatt-hours per head as against 756 kilowatt-hours per head in the Soviet Union.

Where Politics Is Made

These are the figures for basic industry. Basic industry, however, does not touch directly on the nerves and emotions of the family budget, where politics is made. Consumer goods are more important in politics, and the comparison in consumption is even more depressing than in basic industry. By 1955, it appears, the average Russian will have at his disposal, statistically, more than twice as much grain as the average Frenchman (870 kilograms against 350), twice as many potatoes (six hundred kilograms against three hundred), more fish (thirteen kilos a year against 9.5), more table fats (seventeen kilos against fourteen), more cotton cloth (twenty-eight yards against sixteen), as many shoes (three pairs every two years). He will still have less sugar (twenty kilos a year against the Frenchman's twenty-six), and far less meat (twenty-four kilos against forty-seven kilos).

By 1955 or 1956, according to some French economists, standards of living in France and Russia will be equal. With its fanatic and articulate control of the French working class, the Communist Party can turn such comparisons into political dynamite and street violence.

It should be said at once that most other European economists consider these French calculations outrageously gloomy. But no economist quibbles with the basic content of these French surveys—that the Russian economy is overtaking the west European economies one by one. And the French, most conscious of past greatness and responsibility, are the most alarmed. Even among the most deeply and desperately anti-Communist French politicians, Russia's threat is seen more and more as social and economic rather than military. Present French thinking on the



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subject can be summarized, easily, in a few sentences:

The Soviet Union, however glib its protestations of peace and amity may be, has as its sole, continuing objective the destruction of our kind of world. The means for this destruction are not necessarily military—indeed, a military clash is the most hazardous test the Soviet Union could face. Military means may be employed by the Soviet Union only as the final *coup de grâce*—but only after Communist economic and social development has so eaten away at the convictions of the western democracies that they crumble politically from within. A continuation of present Soviet economic expansion and present European stagnation offers the Soviets an almost ironclad guarantee of ultimate superiority. The basic strategy of the Atlantic alliance and NATO needs, therefore, total rethinking at once so that we can make use of the decade or two of economic advantage that remain.

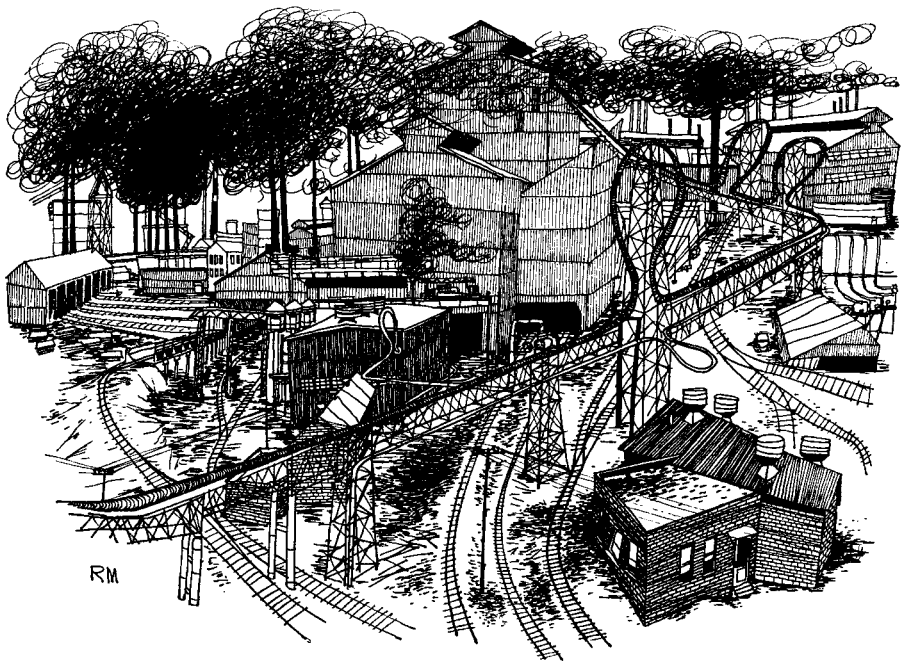
From the Ground Up

The stories told by the economic analysts of a booming Russian economy and the stories of returning travelers who tell of the semi-barbarism in which most Russians continue to live seem at first glance to be in fundamental contradiction. Actually, this contradiction is more apparent than real. All the stories are true.

The Russian economy operates now, as it has since the beginning of state planning, by its own peculiar rules. These are the rules of an economy in which the personal desires of the ordinary people, who dominate our economy, play no part. As western analysts have studied the development of Russian thinking and planning, its profile takes this shape: The basic targets set first are those of energy—of coal, oil, and electric power. The figures that come next in the planners' priority are those of the engineering industries necessary to achieve the energy totals—steel, machines, railways, mines, and the heavy equipment they use.

The state is the monopoly capitalist, monopolist of all forms of production and of the labor of the people involved. What has so far been allowed to the worker, who is the consumer, is only enough to keep him alive and operative to realize the investment goals. Even his protest has been turned to account in the Soviet economy, for it becomes the pretext for the forced labor that feeds the Pharaonic engineering projects.

IN THE western world, heavy industry grew up to feed consumer desire. Iron, steel, and the first machinery were used to supply the textile industry; coal was dug to warm homes; electronics and communications were developed for radios, television, and personal comfort. The Soviet economy functions differently. Even in the new Soviet Five-Year Plan, hailed so loudly at last fall's Russian Communist Party Congress, one finds that the production of capital goods will remain at least two-thirds of total industrial production. Production will rise enormously—but ordinary consumers will still receive only a small portion of its bounty.



The picture of Soviet industry is thus one of enormous power with its foundation resting in mud, filth, and deprivation. The glowing statistics are probably all true, but they are not a picture of human life. The picture of human life at present comes from items snipped from provincial papers. Last year, for example, the newspaper in Chelyabinsk, a city of several hundred thousand people and one of Russia's major steel centers, proudly announced that the first two kitchen gas ranges in town had been installed in the homes of two shock workers.

Another facet of the picture is shown when one compares the development of the eastern European economy with the Russians'. Since 1949, all the satellite economies have been wrenched about to fit, commercially and structurally, into the pattern of Soviet industry. The result has been, despite amazing basic industrial progress, a savage and brutal reduction of all standards of living in the satellite countries.

But it is beyond doubt that Russian industry, in its basic sectors, is rapidly overtaking that of western Europe. The political danger point will come when this expanding basic production reaches the area of consumers' goods.

IT IS hard to give a date for this danger point because two separate calculations are involved. One is a technical one, involving the elaboration of a consumer industry to process the goods of basic industry. The second is a political one, involving the Russian strategy on a global scale.

Any serious investigation of the technical problems involved in erecting a consumer industry and the raising of consumption levels must immediately stigmatize the gloomier French economists' prediction of

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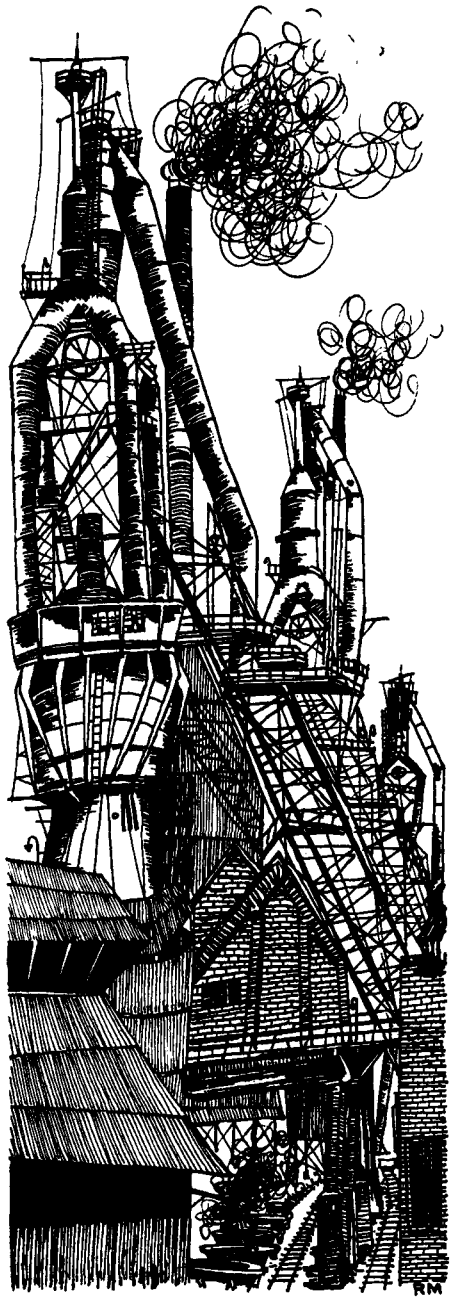
growth intersections within three years as wildly unrealistic. In any advanced western country—the United States, Britain, or France—far more people are employed in processing the basic goods of industry than in creating them, and far more subtle skills are involved. To make an industry that can supply Russians with consumer items as well as basic industrial items requires an effort by the Russian state almost as great as the one it has made in a whole generation of its industrialization. Russia is geared to produce generators and dams, not tiny motors for Mixmasters, record players, and vacuum cleaners. Russia is geared to produce guns and tanks, not new housing and canned foods. Russia is geared to produce crude textiles in enormous quantities, to be sold by the meter in villages and state stores to women ready to sew them; it is not yet ready for the cutting and stitching of ready-to-wear clothes.

MOST OF ALL, the standard of living rests upon food, and any analysis of Russia's food production, other than the statistical, leaves it many years to go before it can match even western Europe. It is true that in both grain and potatoes the Russians will have greater pantry supplies available than the French. But much of the grain goes to feeding draft animals on Russia's backward farms; and the very predominance of these high-caloric, high-starch foods in the Russian diet indicates a low standard of living. High standards depend on fruit, vegetables, milk, and meat—and here even the Russian statistics do not promise equality with the French by 1960.

Specialists argue over the date of the intersection year with all sorts of refined statistics and data. They point out that technological progress has come with a rush in the Soviet Union since the transplantation of many German techniques. Photographs have already been brought back from Moscow of one or two automatic-process plants that surpass anything in American engineering. We know, too, that since the war the first pilot plants have been set up for the production of television sets, washing machines, and electric refrigerators. The output of these comfort-producing plants is small and channeled entirely to the thin layer of Soviet aristocracy, but the plants function. We know that Soviet radio production (of very bad-quality radios) has multiplied five times. Bicycle production has tripled. We know further of the imposing development in the Russian machine-tool industry and of the potential flexibility this gives the Russian industrial system. Britain in 1952 produced only 55,000 machine tools—but Russian production had reached 74,000 in 1950 and is heading for 213,000 in 1955.



This argument over dates of intersection can be prolonged with pages of statistics and deductions—but it is a narrow argument. Few people believe it could come before 1960, the year when Russia may pull abreast of western Europe in basics; but few doubt that it can be achieved by 1975, if the Russians want it to be achieved.

Soviet Blue Chips

Beyond the purely technical problems lie the complexities of politics. The 1960-1975 calculation is based only on technical, or economic, factors. It may be speeded or delayed by the purposes of Russian politics, for with its growing economic strength Russia has a choice of alternatives.

The first that leaps to mind is a beefing up of the Russian arms effort to a point where its competition with the western defense effort would become almost intolerable. Western economists estimate that up to twenty per cent of Russian steel production now goes directly into arms or arms support. The doubling of Russia's steel production and the forecast tripling of its machine-tool production could, if all present proportions of use were maintained, require a commensurate back-breaking effort by the western world.

But there are other equally ominous alternatives open to the Soviet Union. It could, if it wished, sluice its growing production into an offensive in what the western powers still call the backward countries. Russians, unlike Americans, Britons, or Frenchmen, could be indefinitely deprived of comforts if their masters believed it wiser to bind China more tightly to their system and attract India, the Middle East, and Africa into it by the offer of more and more of the capital goods Russia turns out.

Or the Russians could use their productive increase for buccaneering on the world market—by the dumping of surplus wheat below dollar prices, by the dispersal of their mysterious gold production in ways calculated to upset world monetary standards. Stalin's parting legacy of theory to the state he practically created was a precise description of this strategy of economic wrecking—the final disruption of the shattered world market by the uncontrollable intrusion

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of Soviet wares, machines, and intrigue.

Finally, Russia could sluice part of its growth of production into consumer goods to upset western Europe by the sheer magnetism of example. This last alternative seems to Americans, who look at the world from the vast and lofty plateau of their own comfort, a challenge of almost negligible importance. But to western Europeans, particularly to Frenchmen and Italians, it seems the most dramatic and difficult of all possible challenges. The Russians would not even need to alter their economic thinking too violently—if an investment in consumer goods could prove as disruptive to the western world as an investment in arms, it would clearly be, in their cold calculations, well worth while.

IT IS HERE that statesmanship enters into the rivalry of systems. Atlantic diplomacy since the war has been extremely successful in Europe and occasionally brilliant. But it has been a diplomacy geared always to crisis, the meeting of each emergency as it has developed. Statesmanship is the gift of meeting crises before they develop and avoiding them by wise measures taken in time.

We are now faced, since the death of Stalin, with what is a major shift of Russian tactics and, probably, strategy also. If Malenkov & Co. press the peace offensive, it may be because genuine peace, at this moment, serves their ends best. Given a continuation of present trends in Europe and Russia, peace may be a surer means of encompassing Europe's destruction than war.

It is an offensive that must be met. There is nothing inherent in either Russia's physical resources or engineering skills that cannot be matched or surpassed by the Atlantic world—if we are organized in time. There is, moreover, some time available, a period of between ten and twenty years, for all the countries of western Europe to take the necessary steps. The most important of the requirements has already been measured—the creation of a true European Union to maximize the efficient flow of goods and manpower in the peninsula that abuts on Communism.

The framework of the second requirement is also in existence—the Atlantic alliance, which brackets America and Europe, and which, once we realize that the threat is as much economic as military, can strengthen both halves of the free world.

The third requirement is that the western Europeans themselves throw into a forward surge, at whatever cost, all their scattered energies and will to live. The outlook is bleak only if Atlantic thinking does not expand to understand it, only if we rest content with building guns and fortresses.

. . . And an American Expert's Response

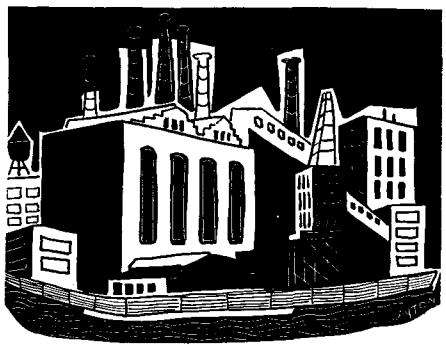
J. K. GALBRAITH

EVER SINCE the end of the First World War, it has been a settled habit, in thinking of our position in the world, to assume absolute and unchallenged industrial supremacy. Whatever our other weaknesses, there has always been our industrial plant, and nothing anywhere else in the world could compare with it.

In absolute terms this presumption of industrial supremacy is still valid. Our total industrial output is still greater than that of any rival. But another fact that must be taken into account is that Russian output is growing at a faster rate than our own.

The time has come when we need to reflect on the meaning of our slower rate of growth, both as it affects our position in the world and in relation to what, if anything, we should do to bestir ourselves.

As a guide to our reflections, it would be helpful if we knew what the Russians intend to do with their expanding economy. There was once a quaint notion that the primary purpose of industrial output was to provide goods for the nourishment, shelter, and general enjoyment of people at large. There is always the possibility, of course, that the Russians may decide to use their output for these purposes. If this should happen, we might—and with some reason—relax.



Some European economists have even suggested that the long-run effect of such a policy would be deeply damaging to the West; sooner or later Russia would come to present such a spectacular contrast in living standards to much of western Europe that discontented Europeans would become Communists in droves. But this danger could only arise if the threat of war had receded—because the Russians had chosen oleomargarine (one must al-

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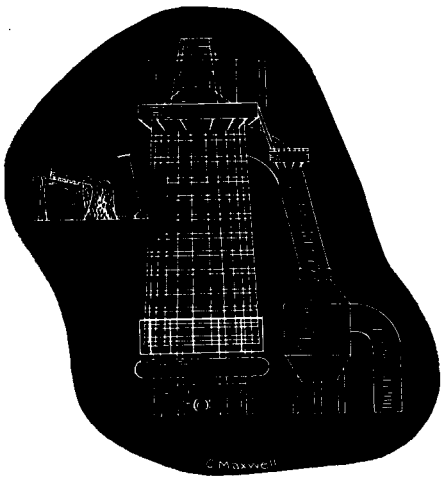


ways keep his clichés up to date) instead of guns. For anyone who continues to regard war and the promiscuous employment of atomic weapons as an almost uniquely inconvenient prospect, worry about the subversive effects of comparative living standards would be wonderfully welcome by contrast.

In any case, even if the Russians were able to get on to a two-droshky, two-samovar standard, it is hard to believe that this in itself would be very influential in making converts to Communism. If such contrasts were decisive, French and Italian workers, having once heard the Voice of America on automobile ownership in the UAW, would now be solidly for capitalism. Concern over whether the long-suffering masses of the Soviet Union may one day be too demonstrably endowed with consumer goods is almost certainly premature.

The world and dictatorship being what they are, there is a less happy likelihood that increased Soviet production will continue to go into armaments and the economic base that supports it. This would mean continued increases in output and a growing challenge to our absolute margin of industrial advantage. Here we see a more relevant cause for alarm. But it is also one that needs to be seen in perspective.

Magic Weapon

Some time during the years between the two World Wars, economic factors in warfare were rescued from their age-old subservience to armies and given a role of their own in strategic calculations. The rescue was a fine thing, but the same cannot be said for all the calculations that have been made. A kind of one-to-one relationship was assumed between industrial capacity and military potential: It was assumed that if you increased the one you increased the other in proportion. From this assumption has followed our faith, much of it quite unjustified, in the efficacy of economic warfare. It was enthusiasm for this magic weapon which led, after the Second World War, to emphasis on economic disarmament as a pacifying device and to support for proposals which, had they been carried out, would have visited pointless suffering on the victims.

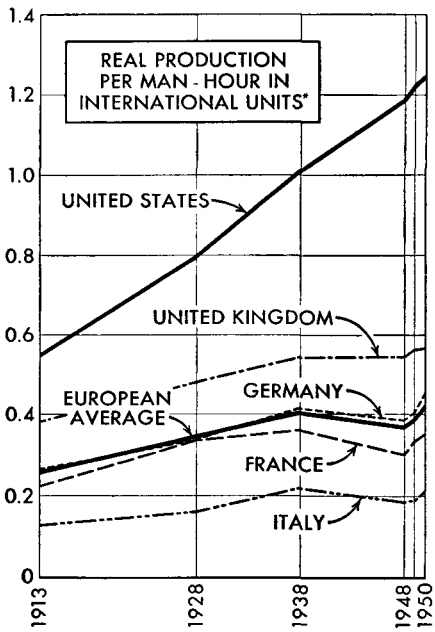
We have become unduly fearful of "building up" potential enemies by trade. But the most spectacular consequence of the discovery that economics has a bearing on warfare is the way measures of gross national product or of steel ingot capacity are now cited in discussions of military policy. Know these figures, it is argued, and you know who will win a war.

LET us take the case of steel. There is, assuredly, a certain quantity of steel which a country must have for a modern war. There is also such a thing as more than enough. The amount that is needed is related to the military and civilian manpower resources of the country; and in general, the greater its manpower, the more steel it can use. During the Second World War, Japan, with a peak yearly output of 7.8 million tons, quite clearly had less steel than it needed. However, those of us who studied the German war economy were inclined to think that the Reich had about as much steel as it required. Counting what they picked up in occupied territories, the Germans in 1943 had 34.8 million tons. This was only a fraction of what was available to Germany's enemies but it was sufficient to make Germany an exceedingly formidable enemy on the front lines and to leave a sizable proportion for comparatively low-priority uses at home. With another ten million tons, Germany would not actually have been much more formidable than it was; much of the excess would have gone to less urgent uses.

Our own vast wartime use of steel resulted partly from the fact that we were building a vast armament industry (and even more steel capacity) and also a huge Navy and merchant fleet at the same time that we were producing the actual weapons of warfare. We also committed steel to a great many uses that were not directly related to military success. In other words, circumstances allowed us time for a rather luxurious consumption of our steel. Circumstances will hardly favor us so again.

Thus it is entirely possible that present Soviet steel capacity—presumably somewhere between 30 and 35 million tons annually—is nearly enough to permit the nation to fight at close to maximum efficiency. By the same token, only a minor fraction of our 117 million tons could be brought into really effective military use in the event of war. The very existence of the remainder might tempt us to use it—and to tie up scarce manpower—in plausible but not very decisive ways. Both the Soviet Union and the United States may already be at or beyond the

THE GROWING GAP



Our productivity has risen much faster than Europe's

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point where additional steel capacity can make a decisive contribution to war potential.

As with steel, so with other basic industrial resources: Absolute quantity is far less important than ability to turn what is available to effective military use. This means that in war the specific capacity for fabricating weapons is much more important than industrial capacity in general. It means that military strength depends most of all on a high state of preparedness. In the first years of the Second World War, Germany and Japan showed the strategic power of weapons on hand. It was only because our own lack of weapons on hand happened to be not quite fatal that we were able to bring a fair part of our much greater industrial potential into military use. More recently it has been made evident that steel-ingot capacity in the United States does not mean shells in Korea.

Ever since a truce in Korea became a reasonable prospect, we have been busily telling each other not to relax. Assuming that the Russians have not suddenly become phlegmatic and unambitious, the warning seems well advised. A candid recognition of our declining margin of industrial superiority may also be an inducement to keep our guard up. If so, we shall be stronger, not weaker, as a result. The mere fact of industrial superiority, on which we have relied in the past, was never a very good guarantee of military security.

Do We Need a Shot in the Arm?

In proving a case there is always some danger of proving too much. To argue that total industrial output or its rate of increase is not decisive in relation to military strength is not to argue that these factors are unimportant. There is still the question of whether we should seek a greater rate of expansion in our own economy.

This could be done. What is required is a higher volume of savings and out of it a higher level of investment. The obvious measures come readily to mind. To the greatest extent possible we should shift taxes from incomes to consumer's goods. This would have the com-

bined effect of restraining current consumption and freeing from taxation the larger incomes that contribute heavily to total savings. Investment would be favored by a lenient attitude toward profits and, where necessary, by outright public sponsorship of new plant.

Before launching any such policy of forced growth, however, we would do well to give it a careful second and third look. The price of a higher rate of savings and a higher volume of investment would, almost certainly, be a greatly increased vulnerability to depression. If the necessary amount of investment were not made, the whole process of expansion would come to a halt and go into reverse. The government might take responsibility for underwriting the volume of investment made possible by the new high rate of savings, but this would involve rather more intervention in the economy than most Republicans thought they were voting for last November. In other words, a forced rate of expansion in the economy requires a considerable measure of "planning"; otherwise it increases the risk of depression, with the certainty that there will be no growth at all.

Quite possibly, then, we should settle for a less ambitious objective. We should seek a continuation of present rates of growth and insure ourselves as far as possible against the kind of interruptions we have experienced in the past and which we would far less easily survive in the future. While military considerations may not require that our economy grow as rapidly as that of Russia, military and political considerations both require that we avoid another depression. There is no need for another lecture on what a serious depression would do to our position in the world; there must be few subjects on which so little remains to be said.

THERE ARE still, however, a number of illusions concerning the task we face in avoiding depression. The Great Depression, for example, was not, as one current view appears to hold, merely an adventitious occurrence, important only for the opportunity it provided the New Dealers for economic monkey business. Nor did the New Dealers—to cite another current and somewhat inconsistent view—work all the changes in the economy necessary to ensure stability from here to eternity. Nor is a good short depression just the thing we need.

Perhaps most of all we need to recognize that for the job of preventing a depression some awkward choices in government policy will have to be made. Facts and logic cannot be entirely accommodated to the convenience of the Administration in power. There are not a great number of things the government can do, in our system of political economy, to reverse a deflationary spiral. A sharp cut in taxes—especially in those levies that are most clearly at the expense of private spending—is one available weapon. The use of depression itself as an occasion to get ahead with needed public works and improvements is another. These measures, together with lower interest rates and liberalized Social Security, are among the relatively few alternatives to a policy of sitting tight and hoping that the economy will turn its own corners.

Not since 1932 has any responsible political figure shown much public enthusiasm for a policy of sitting tight. Yet there still seems to be a considerable reluctance to contemplate the full consequences of a positive policy. Secretary of the Treasury George M. Humphrey, speaking before the Associated Press a few weeks ago, advocated both tax reduction and a planned expansion of public works expenditures in the event of a depression. He also promised a scrupulously balanced budget. These are palpable contradictions; arithmetic is not so malleable.

Perhaps, indeed, our first response to an expanding Russian economy should be to jettison, so far as ancient habit allows, the practice of substituting convenience for fact in discussing our own economy.

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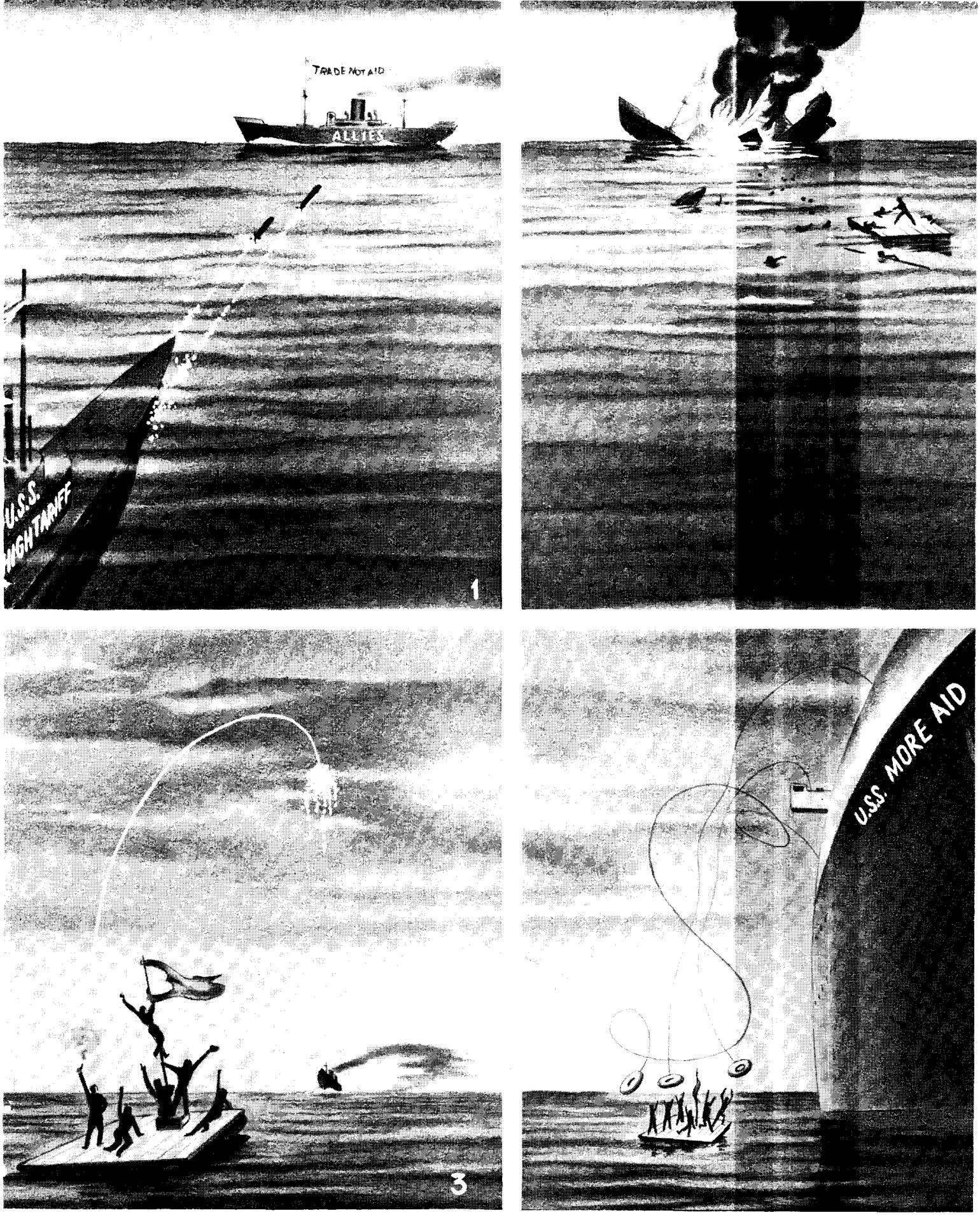

Cause and Effect

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How Wrong Can Economists Be?

J. A. LIVINGSTON

"Economists have not yet evolved, if they ever will, a technique for making dependable forecasts." The words are those of Arthur F. Burns, whom President Eisenhower has named as his economic adviser. And alas, they are all too true.

The present imperfect state of this particular skill has been amply demonstrated by its record since 1945. The most-publicized forecast of the period could hardly have been less correct—the prediction of eight million unemployed after V.-J. Day by the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, of which Robert R. Nathan was deputy director and economist.

Again in February, 1949, a government economic adviser missed his guess badly. Leon H. Keyserling, then vice-chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, strongly recommended stand-by price and wage controls to fend off inflation. Even as he was testifying, the 1949 recession was well under way.

Businessmen are equally liable to error. Sewell Avery, head of Montgomery Ward & Co., assuming that a commodity price collapse would follow the Second World War, as such downswings had followed previous wars, kept his company's inventories low and curbed expansion. Since 1945, Ward's sales in dollars have increased only sixty-five per cent as against 180 per cent for its chief rival, Sears, Roebuck.

Since mid-1946 I have recorded forecasts by a group of economists associated with corporations, banks, investment firms, labor unions, government, and universities and research organizations by means of semi-annual questionnaires which these economists have been good enough to answer. Out of twelve forecasts the economists' consensus could be graded "right" only four times.

When the first questionnaire was sent out in June, 1946, reconversion was well under way, business was booming, and the stock market was climbing to a new high. The respondents were unanimously bullish. As a group, they forecast an eight per cent rise in industrial production. That forecast was on the button. But they didn't stick with it.

In September, the stock market broke badly. And in November, when the next poll was taken, the economists who had been unanimously bullish in May were almost unanimously bearish. Yet business was still rising, as they had predicted.

Throughout 1947 the forecasters waited for the decline the stock market supposedly signaled. When it didn't come, they began to waver. They didn't go as far as Mr. Keyserling did a few months later, but by the end of 1948 they were predicting that business would remain on its current plateau. Actually, the 1949 downswing was on its way.

As that downswing progressed, the economists began revising their judgments. They were most pessimistic in May, 1949, just when business was bracing for a second-half upturn. That made me wonder whether economists influence business or business influences economists.

The poll has not been going on long enough nor is the number of participants (now about fifty) large enough to warrant dogmatic generalizations, but I have drawn some conclusions.

Business economists during the postwar period tended to be more pessimistic and "conservative" than economists as a whole. This had a fairly logical basis. During a boom, a business economist's bread is buttered on the side of caution. If he's overoptimistic and wrong, his company's warehouses will be bulging with high-priced inventories when prices drop. The company will lose money and he may lose his job. On the other hand, if business turns out to be good, the boss probably will be too preoccupied with unexpected profits to fire anybody.

Economists of banks also seem to have a conservative bias. Bankers are creditors. Their capital is in dollars, their assets are repayable in dollars. They don't have inventories consisting of oil, copper, or rubber as an inflation hedge. When prices rise, bankers' assets have a lower purchasing power. When prices fall, their purchasing power increases. The wish—the desire for disinflation—is often father to the forecast.

The government economists have generally displayed a strong political bias. In 1949, when President Truman wanted stand-by price controls, it would have been impolitic for Mr. Keyserling to forecast a drop in prices or business. The Robert Nathan forecast of eight million unemployed in 1945 could also have had political roots. Mr. Nathan and most of his associates wanted a Full Employment Act, increased Social Security benefits, and a higher minimum wage. To get the cure, they promised the disease.

Government economists have a distinct planning bias, too. They rely on the President's budget predictions or put faith in official Army and Navy procurement schedules—esti-

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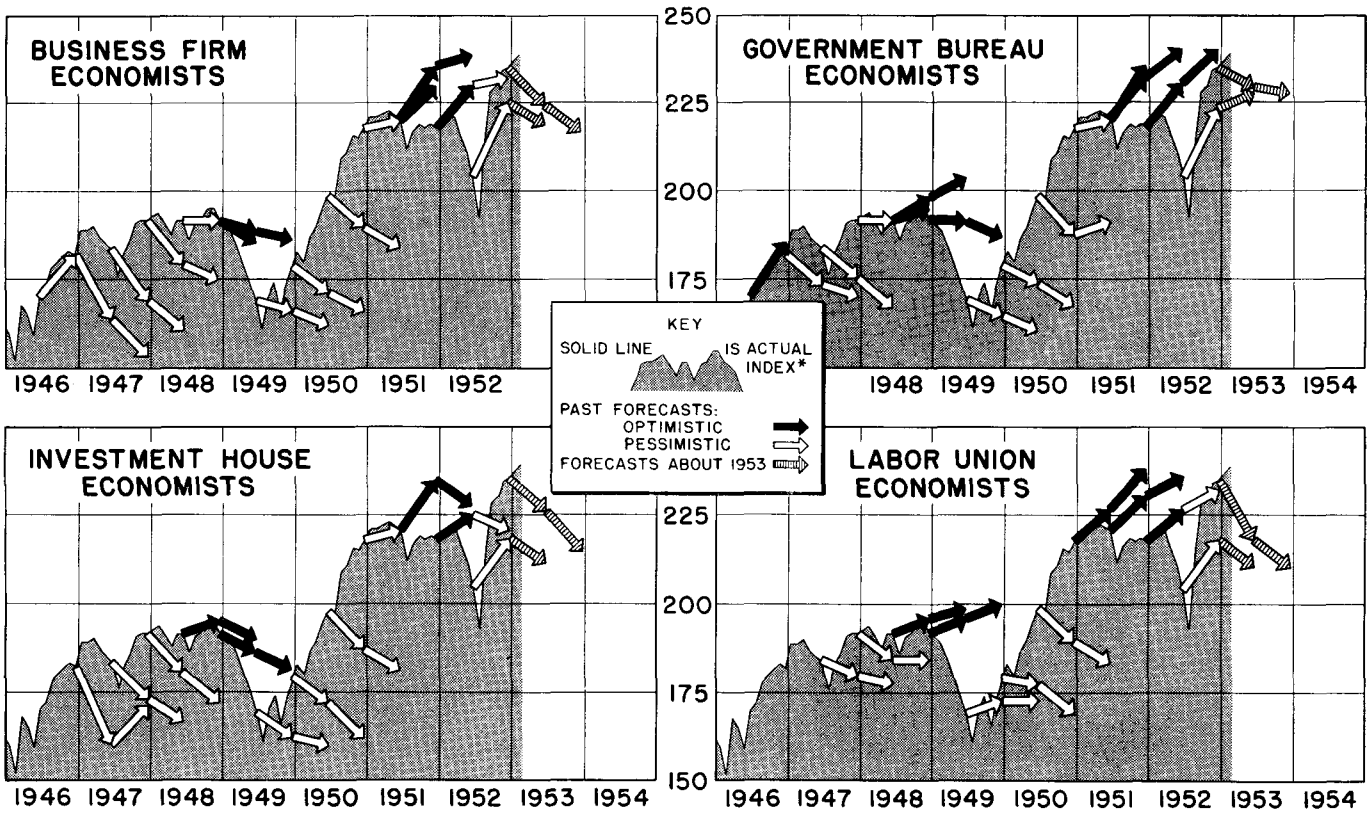
SCOREBOARD ON ECONOMISTS

They are nearly right only once out of three times



*Federal Reserve Bank Index of Industrial Production (1935-1939=100)

Chart by Starworth

mates to which they have often been parties. They stressed inflation prospects in 1951 principally because they accepted official schedules of defense expenditures.

Economists for investment and brokerage firms seem to be occupationally optimistic. For several years, investment experts have been more optimistic about stock prices than other economists, but less optimistic about actual business conditions.

Moral scruples—a kind of economic Puritanism—also influenced postwar forecasts. Every so often, an economist would supplement the statistics in his questionnaire with a letter saying that the United States was living beyond its means and riding for a fall. These economists usually were associated with business, banking, or investment firms, and their pessimism had an obvious political motivation. It will be interesting to see if, under a Republican Administration, they become increasingly optimistic.

Economists of labor unions usually showed an inflationary bias. This was no doubt related to collective bargaining techniques in the postwar period, when the rising cost of living was a major argument for wage boosts.

All this has led me to a psychoanalytical definition of forecasting: "The projection of one's hopes and fears." Having projected his hopes or fears, the forecaster marshals all the evidence to support his forecast and rejects evidence opposing it.

Nine of thirty economists who have been consistent respondents to the questionnaires did fairly well. Most of them reasoned that pent-up demand for goods and services after the war would guarantee good business. Some of them missed the 1949 downturn, but otherwise they were good on the direction of business.

Luck may make or break a forecast. A forecaster must go outside economic data—consciously or unconsciously. Implicit in any forecast these days are guesses on what Malenkov will do, the level of defense spending and taxes, the duration of the Korean War. An economist forecasts what he knows he doesn't know along with what he thinks he knows.

Let me illustrate this. In June, 1950, a handful of economists were optimistic. Along came Korea, and the Korean boom implemented the expected. Many other economists expected a mild rise between June and December, and then a drop. Korea upset their expectations.

Seemingly a successful and striking forecast can be made only when the forecaster differs from most other forecasters. If he sees something that most of the people don't and if events beyond his ken don't interfere with his prediction, then he may make a ten-strike. But the odds are two to one against.

Thus forecasting is still a trial-and-error business. And to quote the President's new economic adviser again: "The choice before man is not whether to engage in forecasting or to abstain from it, but whether to base expectations on 'hunches' or on lessons carefully distilled from experience."

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An Italian Woman's Thoughts On an Arriving Plenipotentiary

MARINA VITTORIA ROSSETTI

ROME

THE NEW United States Ambassador to Italy is said by the press of both countries to be a woman of unusual ability, intelligence, and tact. She will be called upon to display just these qualities. Almost immediately she will find herself up against numerous difficulties, some of which she will share with all other United States ambassadors in western Europe and others of which will spring specifically from her lack of direct experience in Italian affairs, from the fact that she is a woman, and from the fact that, in the capital of Catholicism, she is a Catholic.

All of these difficulties will be accentuated by the unusual circumstances in which Mrs. Luce finds Italy. The bitterness of the political battles on the eve of the national elections will make it especially hard for her to obtain a serene and impartial view of the situation, and partisan propaganda will inevitably misrepresent to the Italian people the actions of both herself and her government.

The acts and the intentions of every prominent representative of the United States government in Europe are always examined and evaluated with curiosity and a certain amount of skepticism. Moreover, it is something quite new to Italians to see so responsible a post given to a woman. The news of Mrs. Luce's appointment was at first greeted with a certain amazement. Although the new Constitution of Italy gives women equal rights, in practice they have not attained the positions in public life that are open to the women of other countries. They were granted suffrage only seven years ago, and although they have several representatives in Parliament, only one, Signora Cingolani Guidi, has been given a job in the Executive branch of the government. "To what low estate Italy has fallen if the United States is sending us a woman ambassador!" was the spontaneous comment of one not particularly old-fashioned gentleman.

For this reason the new ambassador's first moves will be observed with particular attention. Many people will blame her sex for anything that rubs them the wrong way. However, the general attitude is made up of curiosity blended with skepticism of a benevolent kind. "Let's see what a woman can do!" Mrs. Luce's tact, intelligence, and warmth may transform these initial misgivings into admiration, and what now seems a handicap may prove to be an advantage.

Between Right and Left

Mrs. Luce has unquestionably had a brilliant domestic political career, but her acquaintance with Italian problems is indirect, acquired in the course of a few brief visits to Italy and from concentrated study in the weeks before her departure to take up her post. But study, no matter how intensive and fruitful, cannot substitute for experience.

To someone from a country where the political scene is dominated by two parties which alternately play the roles of Government and well-organized Opposition, the Italian picture cannot help seeming complex. Italy is still taking its first steps as a democracy after suffering twenty years of totalitarian rule, a lost war, and a wrecked economy.

The basic political divisions are fairly clear: The Center is composed of the large mass of the Christian Democrats with a few lesser democratic parties—Liberals, Republicans, and Saragat Socialists; on the Right are the Monarchists and neo-Fascists; on the Left are the Nenni Socialists and the Communists. But the generalizations and misrepresentations that will fill the air before the elections will obscure the true faces of the various parties and their relative

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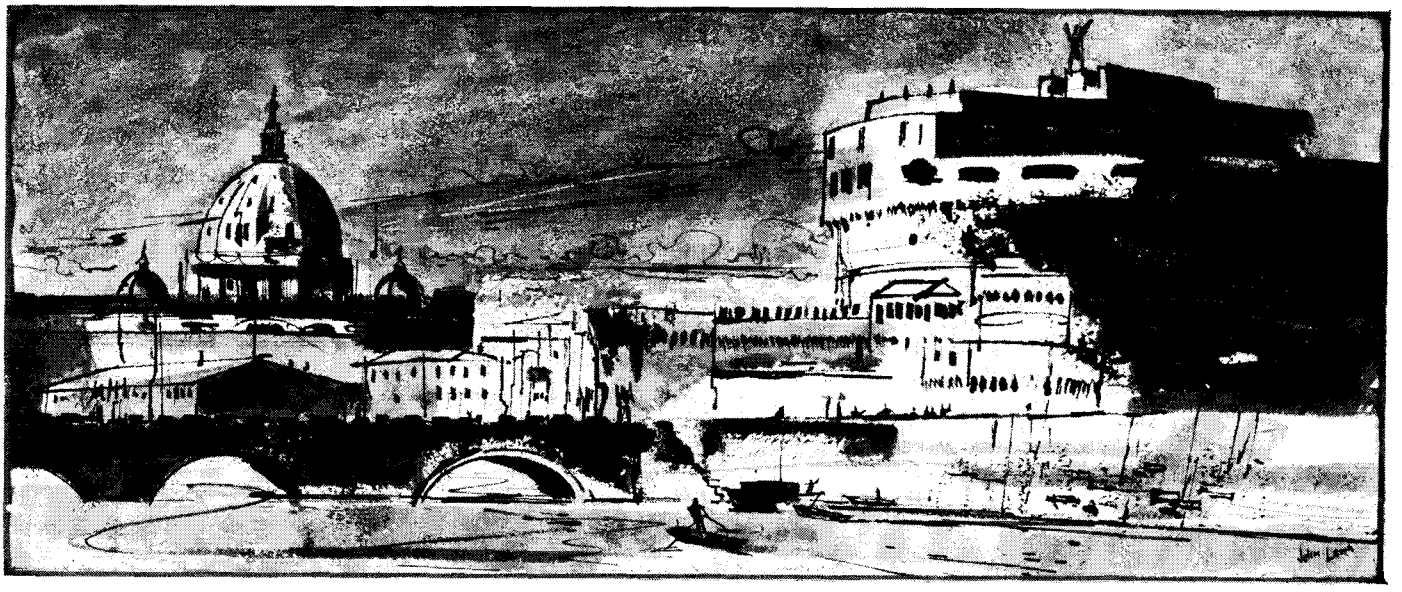

importance. In the struggle between Communists and anti-Communists, the danger of a Red victory is likely to be exaggerated.

The forcible repressions of Communism practiced in the United States would be fraught with danger if carried out in Italy. The government has shown its strength whenever necessary, but two million Communist voters cannot be outlawed. Italian Communism is in part a manifestation of despair, and despair cannot be stamped out by police action.

Another mistake would be to insist upon amalgamating all the non-Communist forces into an anti-Communist bloc. Such a plan attracts only those who have a very superficial knowledge of Italian politics or who are dazzled by the exaggerations of the extreme right-wing parties to the point of embracing the oversimplified and negative thesis that Communism is the only danger.

The right wing is just as much of a menace to Italian democracy as the left wing. While Communism is slowly losing ground, neo-Fascism is gaining. Of course, the proportions are different; in the last elections the extreme Left won 33.8 per cent of the votes and the extreme Right 9.9 per cent.

If the idea of a union between Right and Center were to find approval and encouragement abroad, it might lead to a split in the Christian Democratic Party. That would be dangerous, for a strong center party is and may be for some time to come the only guarantee of a Government powerful enough to withstand Communist maneuvers.

Old Religion in an Old Land

Because Mrs. Luce is a recent convert to Catholicism, she will not find it easy to understand the old Catholicism of Italy, which has remained intact for centuries but has aspects that often startle foreign Catholics.

One distinction must be made from the start. To say that ninety-eight per cent of all Italians are Catholics is not to say that Italy is five times as Catholic as the United States. With few exceptions, American Catholics conscientiously subscribe to the doctrine of the Church, completely accept its moral teachings, partake of the sacraments, and, in short, present a consistent religious attitude. Italian Catholics do not behave thus. It is almost impossible to define statistically the percentage of Italian Catholics who are "practicing Catholics" in the American sense, but it is assuredly not a large one. It would be equally erroneous to believe that the term "Catholic" in Italy is no more than a label derived from submission to the baptismal rite in infancy.

Italian history, culture, and civilization, the structure of family and social life, are all so permeated by Catholicism that even the most outright enemy of the Church has a Catholic foundation of which he himself may be unaware. Communists often insist upon a church wedding and funeral and send their children, especially the girls, to Catholic schools. When I recently gave a series of talks on religious persecution behind the Iron Curtain, in many villages I found the church the best place to speak because the local Communists, who would have ostentatiously stayed away from a public hall, still appeared at services regularly.

On the other hand, we must remember that although Italian life is thoroughly permeated by Catholicism, many currents of opposition to the Church can be traced in the nation's history. We have only to recall the Ghibelline movement in the Middle Ages and the events of the nineteenth-century Risorgimento. From these stem a long-standing anti-clerical tradition. To some Italians anti-clericalism is a conviction which leads to definite political affiliations, often with the Republican or, to a lesser degree, with the Liberal Party. To others, more numerous, it is a superficial attitude. Even some very devout Catholics make anti-clerical remarks so pungent as to astonish even non-Catholics from other countries. Gioacchino Belli, who wrote such barbed satire against the Church and its clergy, is the poet of Rome par excellence, and members of the Catholic aristocracy and many priests and prelates still read him with delighted indulgence.

The real power of Catholicism in

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a country where even atheists have an unconscious religious feeling and believers are wont to reveal an anti-clerical side cannot be measured with the cut-and-dried standards applicable elsewhere. One important factor must be taken into consideration. In countries where Catholics form a minority, they are likely to share the same opinions about matters outside their religion. This is the normal attitude of a minority anxious to preserve its own identity and defend itself against hostility or incomprehension.

But in Italy, where Catholicism is the norm, churchgoers have a vast range of political and social tendencies. This holds true even within the ranks of the Catholic Action organization.

At a time when the activities and indeed the liberty of the Church are under attack from avowedly anti-religious elements, it is natural that most Catholics and most members of Catholic Action should vote for the Christian Democrats, who provide the only sure defense against the inroads of Communism. But the Church does not identify itself with any party. In their political life Catholics act as citizens, not as believers.

A Word of Caution

As I have said, the passion and virulence that characterize Italian electoral campaigns are bound to distort the true features of the Italian political scene and the normal relationship between religion and politics to the point where they are unrecognizable. Party labels and slogans will be falsely represented; logic will be reduced to absurdity. The Communists will paint themselves as the champions of human dignity and national independence, and the neo-Fascists will portray themselves as democratic to the core. Parties founded upon atheistic materialism will make public demonstrations of religious zeal, and the Christian Democrats will bury the achievements of their social reform under an avalanche of humorous posters, jingles, and cartoons. If past performance is any guide, the campaign will be lacking in seriousness, common sense, and taste.

The new ambassador of the United States has arrived in the midst of this period of tension and verbal violence. Of course, Mrs. Luce's mission, like that of every diplomat accredited to a sovereign state, is circumscribed, and she can exercise no direct influence over Italian domestic affairs. But her mere presence will carry a certain weight, and people are sure to attach political significance to the timing of her arrival on April 22, just before the elections.

Extreme prudence must be her watchword. Her American mentality, developed under historical and economic conditions quite different from those of Europe, makes a certain number of *faux pas* inevitable, in spite of the best intentions in the world. And any error of judgment or behavior is sure to be played up by insidious propaganda which will appeal to feelings of national honor, dignity, and independence.

Mrs. Luce's diplomacy will serve to stabilize Italy's democratic government if, as we all hope, they lead to greater understanding and co-operation between Italy and the United States in the international field. But where domestic policy is concerned, such understanding will be served less by what she does than by what she leaves undone. Foreign intervention in the Italian elections of 1948 was in many cases inopportune, and today it would produce an effect diametrically opposite to that which it might seek to obtain. I refer, in this connection, to the promises the Allies made in regard to Trieste and the flood of absurd letters, half coaxing, half threatening, that was loosed on Italian voters by relatives and friends abroad. The repetition of such political and psychological errors could be exceedingly dangerous.

If the fact of Mrs. Luce's being an American woman lays her open to misunderstanding, there is even more peril in her declared Catholic faith. All over the world, Communist propaganda describes the Vatican as enslaved by American economic interests, and now it will almost surely have recourse to such formulas as Vatican = Wall Street; Wall Street = U.S. government; therefore, Clare Boothe Luce = Vatican. It will be uesless to protest that Mrs. Luce is Ambassador to Italy and not to the Holy See and to distinguish between her personal and political activities. Communist propaganda does not hesitate to fly in the face of logic. And both the Catholic Church and its faithful daughter may suffer in the ensuing confusion.

The new ambassador must be prepared for personal attacks—offensive scribblings on walls, public demonstrations. But it would be a mistake to take these too seriously, for they are well-known maneuvers of the Communist political machine. An even greater mistake would be to attribute the intemperance of a few hotheads to "the Italian people." For the great majority of the Italian people are ready to have cordial feelings toward Mrs. Luce as soon as she shows them that she is an intelligent, warm-hearted, and understanding friend.

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The Deal We Haven't Made with Franco

THEODORE DRAPER

If diplomats die of frustration, the newly appointed U.S. Ambassador in Madrid, James C. Dunn, is stationed in one of the most dangerous posts in the world.

When I was in Madrid at an earlier stage of the present negotiations, the American correspondents stationed there were doing most of the suffering from frustration. Their papers expected them to keep the American people informed, but the negotiators had entered into an agreement to keep them from getting any information. Secrecy was bad enough, but the deliberate leaks were even worse. The false alarms that have been sounded around these strange negotiations in the last two years have made them a journalistic nightmare.

The late Admiral Forrest P. Sherman suddenly flew to Madrid in the midsummer heat of July, 1951, to ask Generalissimo Franco whether he wished to negotiate a military-economic agreement with the United States. When Franco said that he did, the stage was supposedly set for a quick accord. The position of Stanton Griffis, then our Ambassador in Madrid, was so pro-Franco that other American officials were apparently misled.

On the last day of 1951, the Mutual Security Agency's top representative in Europe announced at a press conference in Madrid that a new era of collaboration between Washington and Madrid was about to begin. He expressed the hope that a bilateral agreement would be concluded "within ninety days."

Statements like this from Europe amazed people in Washington. The State Department and MSA were still waiting for the Joint Chiefs of Staff to make up their minds on what to negotiate about. As it turned out, the negotiations could not even begin, let alone be concluded, in ninety days. The formal negotiations in Madrid did not get started until April 16, 1952, and concrete U.S. proposals were not ready for submission to the Spaniards until the end of May.

Scoops from Madrid

Constantine Brown of the Washington *Evening Star* sent several columns on the negotiations from Madrid at the end of October. He disclosed that the negotiations "are about to be completed." He even knew that "there have never been any serious differences" between the negotiators. Brown represented Franco as being so anxious to get an agreement that he was willing to forgo getting answers from the Americans about some of the problems that worried him the most.

Another version of this same story

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came out of Madrid a few days later on the eve of the U.S. elections. On November 3, 1952, the New York *Times* carried on its front page a report from Camille M. Cianfarra, to the effect that the major obstacles to an agreement had been removed and an official announcement was to be expected "soon." The story had obviously come from Spanish sources. The most suspicious aspect of Cianfarra's despatch was its timing; it was almost as if someone were trying to commit the new Administration in advance.

WEEKS PASSED. Months passed. President Eisenhower was inaugurated. But no Spanish-American agreement was announced. Nothing was announced.

Finally, the silence was broken in the *Saturday Evening Post*. An article entitled "What a Bargain Franco Drove with Us!" by Ernest O. Hauser appeared in the issue of February 21, 1953. Judging from the title, Hauser did not think much of the bargain, but at least he claimed to know what it was.

Hauser wrote that the United States would pay to modernize some existing Spanish airbases, in return for which Franco would extend a minimal degree of hospitality to us as his guests. The construction contract would go to a Spanish company employing Spanish labor. The Americans permitted to stay around to look after their own permanent installations would be held down to about four or five hundred, and a single American air wing of sixty-five planes to be stationed there

PLOYARDT

would be required to move elsewhere every three months. Hauser mentioned that we would have to build up Franco's army and pay an additional price in economic aid.

But now it looks as if Hauser also went out on a limb. A few days after his article was published, Spanish Foreign Minister Alberto Martín Artajo said that the negotiations were moving slowly because of their "delicate nature." More recently, Ambassador Dunn told correspondents in his first news conference in Madrid that part of the delay was due to the change of Administration in Washington. After twelve months of negotiations, the starting point has evidently been reached. After all this spadework, both sides are apparently no nearer on crucial matters of high policy than they were at the time of Admiral Sherman's visit.

The Greedy Generals

Despite the official conspiracy of silence and misinformation, there are forces at work which cannot be kept secret and which almost shriek out the reasons why both sides have had so much trouble.

On the Spanish side, Franco maintains his power because, as long as the army stands behind him, he is the arbiter between rival groups.

In this matter, as in so many others, the armed forces play the dominant role. In principle, they are in favor of a U.S.-Spanish agreement. The trouble is that the only one of the services that really counts in Spanish politics is the army. It is primarily interested in "hardware" for itself—tanks, guns, and equipment of all kinds. Accordingly, the modernization and enlargement of Spanish airbases does not excite the generals, including Franco. The main difficulty which has held up the negotiations is the Spanish Army's unsatisfied appetite.

In effect, both sides have been working at cross purposes. For the Spaniards, the army has the highest priority. For the Americans, the army is the most expensive and least remunerative investment that could be made. The Spaniards have used the airbases primarily as bait to hook as many dollars as possible for the army. The Americans have had to consider how to buy off the army in

order to get airbases. Franco has even vaguely offered to send some troops to Korea. A Spanish battalion or two would be a cheap price to pay for a claim on the United States to take care of the whole Spanish Army.

THE FINANCIAL and industrial interests of Spain also favor an agreement, in principle. But again the trouble is that they are in favor of it for what they can get out of it. Again the United States is caught in a crossfire between rivals. The "free enterprise" sector in Spain is mortally afraid that American economic aid will be used by the Franco régime to build up the nationalized industries that are controlled by the Instituto Nacional de Industria. On the other hand, the I.N.I. fears that American aid will work in favor of private business interests and against nationalization.

An amendment to the Mutual Security Act sponsored by former Senator William Benton (D., Connecticut) provided that American aid would be made available only if the receiving countries accepted the principles of free trade-unionism, the encouragement of private enterprise, and the discouragement of cartels. In the case of Spain, the point about trade unions was never taken seriously. But the point about private enterprise is more significant because

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it involves a very real struggle inside Spain itself.

Spanish private enterprise is sorely beset and looks to U.S. private enterprise for support. Direct economic aid is only one aspect of this question. A wave of U.S. private investment is generally expected to follow in the wake of any broad agreement. Anyone who puts money into Spain—and the biggest Madrid hotels are bulging with high-budgeted investment scouts—must expect to get into the middle of a bitter internal struggle for economic power.

The Falangist core of the Franco régime feels that it has much to lose from a successful U.S.-Spanish agreement. The I.N.I. is run by unreconstructed Falangists, headed by former Minister of Industry and Commerce Juan Antonio Suances. To the Falangists, the United States represents two enemies—the party system in politics and the private-enterprise system in economics. The Falangists have been going downhill for some time, at least in terms of public recognition, and their resentment has been growing. It is no secret that they would consider an agreement an entering wedge for the economic and political betrayal of the fascist premises of the régime. From time to time, Franco has found it necessary to assure them that he remains an ardent Falangist.

Finally, a very powerful portion of the Church is most unhappy about a possible tie-up with the United States. For many high Spanish churchmen, the United States represents a great stronghold of irreconcilable Protestantism, and even the Catholic Church in the United States is not exempt from the suspicion of heresy. To the extent that the Church influences the ideas and attitudes of the average Spaniard, popular resistance to the negotiations has been set in motion.

WHAT ALL this adds up to is a powerful combination of existing forces behind an influence of historic proportions—Spanish neutralism. The tradition of running away from Europe is so old and the rewards for staying out of the last two World Wars were so great that neutralism has been virtually the only consistent principle of Spanish foreign policy in recent history. It is so precious to most Spaniards, especially to the conservative circles around Franco, that the price for giving it up must be correspondingly high. Indeed, no Spaniard really wants to put a price on it. What the Spaniards really want is to have their cake and eat it too, to take all they can get from us and somehow to hold on to their neutralism. If a formula could be found to carry out this beautiful dream, an agreement would be reached quickly. That no such formula has been or is likely to be discovered is shown by the longevity of the negotiations.

Money in Search of a Policy

The United States has its share of conflicts and confusion too. Basically, the United States has never decided how much the strategic position of Spain is worth to us.

The differences of opinion have ranged from those who think that Spain is worth more than the rest of Europe to those who believe that we have all we need in the rest of Europe and North Africa. Our actual policy has been based on the middle ground that Spain cannot be a full ally in the present circumstances and yet that it cannot be completely disregarded. This middle ground leaves so much undecided that it could easily become the convenient substitute for a policy.

Moreover, the Spaniards know full well that the initiative for the present negotiations did not come from the Executive branch of the government, where it should have normally originated. Congress started the ball rolling by putting Spain down for $100 million in the foreign-aid appropriation two years ago. Another $25 million was added—again without being asked for by the Executive—when the Mutual Security program came before Congress last year. But the Executive ruled that before this money could be handed out, no less than three Mutual Security agreements with Spain had to be arrived at.

The State Department adopted the attitude that Congress had taken the responsibility of deciding to give away the money and that the Pentagon should take the responsibility of deciding what we should get for it. So the Joint Chiefs found themselves with money in search of a policy—not enough money to justify a major policy, but too much to waste.

After many months of brooding

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over the problem, a "package deal" was thought up. Our Air Force wanted some airbases and our Navy wanted something less definite called "floating facilities" or mooring rights. The Spaniards wanted economic aid. This was the original *quid pro quo*.

But as the negotiations developed, the Spaniards became progressively less cheerful about the prospect of our airbases and more insistent on the need to build up their own army, which had not figured prominently in our original calculations. Our negotiators also discovered that the Spaniards were acting as if they had the $125 million in the bag already and the only question was how much more they could get. This question has stumped our negotiators, since only Congress has the power to answer it and the next budget has not been decided on.

THE SPANIARDS have reason to feel that they are much stronger with Congress than they are with the Executive. This was certainly so with the last Administration, and it may be so again with the present one. A small Congressional clique, led by Senator Pat McCarran (D., Nevada), has served the Franco cause so faithfully and well in the past that the Spaniards are convinced that their best course lies in getting Congressional pressure to work on the Executive again. But this is a slow, time-consuming process because Congress can only influence the negotiations indirectly.

When he was head of NATO, President Eisenhower showed no enthusiasm for a tie-up with Spain. During the last Presidential campaign, the controlled Spanish press paid him back by first adopting General MacArthur as its favorite candidate and later Senator Taft. It remains to be seen whether Congressional pressure can force the Eisenhower Administration to do more for Franco than the Truman Administration was willing to do. One thing seems certain: The Eisenhower Administration cannot delay much longer in making up its own mind about the Spanish problem.

The very basis of the present negotiations, the $125 million, is going to last for only a short time longer. It was written into the last budget, but that runs out on June 30. The sum can be carried over into the next budget only by action of Congress. Whatever position the Administration takes or whatever sum Congress finally settles on, something must be done, and whatever it may be it cannot fail to be significant.

If the figure is the same, the Spaniards will be bitterly disappointed; if it is much higher, the Spanish lobby in Congress will burden the new Administration with an even greater problem of policy.

Getting Off the Hook

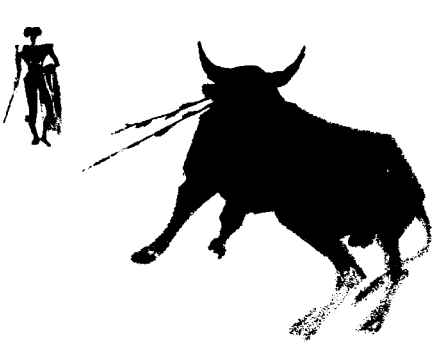
Thus the negotiations in Madrid are only part of the whole story. The real struggle is taking place behind the scenes in both Spanish and American politics. The Franco régime is faced with the most perplexing dilemmas of both internal and external policy. The negotiations with the United States have injected the first really new factor into Spanish politics since the end of the war. The broader implications are so vast and ill-defined and the ruling groups are so divided that Franco cannot make an easy decision. When faced with such a complex situation as this, he usually takes refuge in indecision. Unlike Hitler or even Mussolini, Franco is no gambler. He survived both of them because he outwaited them. Even the least sympathetic diplomatic observers in Madrid have learned that Franco is a dangerous man to underestimate, simply because he takes so long to make up his mind.

Neither side has been able to enter into this negotiation with the conviction that, for better or worse, they have a common destiny. The spirit of the bargaining on both sides has been how to get the most for the least. Yet the issues involved are so far-reaching that they do not lend themselves to mere haggling and horse trading. Even if some agreement should be eventually concluded, because both sides have invested so much time and effort in the negotiations that they cannot afford to lose face by admitting utter failure, it would be wise to treat the result with the utmost reserve. However hard it may be to make any agreement, it will be infinitely harder to fulfill it to the satisfaction of both sides.

FOR THE United States now, there are roughly three choices. We can raise our ante considerably—give Franco substantially what he wants and take only as much as he is willing to give. We can go to the opposite extreme—forget the whole business and stand pat with the bases we already have in western Europe and North Africa. Or we can seek a compromise, with both sides settling for less and neither side really getting anything very significant.

The first choice would please no one except a few extremists in Congress, and it would boomerang as soon as it became clear that appeasing Franco would create worse problems than it was supposed to solve. The second choice may be politically unfeasible at a time when "getting along with Congress" is the order of the day. The third choice, if dressed up with enough diplomatic doubletalk, may be the least painful and probably holds out the greatest temptation to our negotiators.

But will Franco be content to sell even a little of his neutrality for a modest amount of economic and military aid?



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Crustiest Crusader: John Taber, Knight of the Shining Meat Ax

H. H. HARRIS

It is an irony of politics that John Taber, the seventy-three-year-old Congressional strong man, owes his position as Chairman of the powerful House Appropriations Committee to such diverse personalities as Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Taber, by his own jocular admission "the worst Republican in Congress," is a cantankerous banker from the Finger Lakes section of New York. He is now in a position to remake the Federal budget to the pattern of his pinchpenny, isolationist desires. Until the government's major spending bills clear his committee—probably not before late summer—there will be anxiety in London, Paris, Tokyo, and most other capitals of the free world.

"Generous John" (the epithet was applied gently by House Majority Leader Charles A. Halleck; it produced one of Taber's infrequent smiles) has the purse strings tightly clutched. The Administration will be slowed down to a hobble until Taber decides just how much money its contemplated policies is going to cost New York's 36th Congressional District. For when the terrible-tempered Mr. Taber roars, "I won't give you another red cent," he means "I"—not "We, the committee."

F.D.R. unwittingly conferred on Representative Taber a great political boon. As a freshman Congressman in 1923, Taber had grasped the bottom rung of the House Appropriations Committee ladder and was pulling himself slowly upward, chiefly through attrition in the Republican ranks. Roosevelt's 1932 landslide swept out of office twelve Republican committee members with superior seniority, and Taber awoke, like Lord Byron, to find himself famous. In one lucky surge, Taber had become the ranking minority member of the House's purse-strings committee.

Wide World

Once again fortune smiled, and Taber ascended to committee control in 1947 when the Republicans captured the House. Taber had retained his seat with a wafer-thin plurality of 3,029 votes in the Republican primary, which in New York's 36th District is the only contest.

The Third Chamber

Taber's six-foot-three-inch hulk is somberly garbed and carefully preserved. Although his opponents claim that his heart is much harder than his arteries, Taber's larynx is in fine condition. When so disposed, and he usually is, Taber can summon up more raspy decibels than any Congressional colleague.

On his record, John Taber is neither Republican nor Democratic, although the former party both claims and disclaims him. The fifty-man House Appropriations Committee—largest in either House—which he dominates, is so power-laden that it has been called "the Third Chamber of Congress."

The Constitution requires that money bills originate in the House of Representatives. These bills are dispatched for approval, overhaul, or mutilation to the House Appropriations Committee. The tortures Taber applies in his Third Chamber are exquisite.

When the Aid to Greece and Turkey bill came under Taber's suspicious scrutiny in 1947, he whipped out a three-inch pencil stub, performed what he calls "fifth-grade arithmetic," and announced his conclusion: The job of containing Communism could be done handily for three million dollars less than the Administration had asked.

While Truman writhed, Taber called the Army on the carpet, and in a third-degree session won the admission that the funds request was excessive in the precise amount of three million dollars. So once again it appeared that the best friend a taxpayer ever had was victorious over the idiot spenders.

But there was a backfire—one of the few in Taber's career. Republican and Democratic colleagues who were able to see beyond the boundaries of their Congressional districts pleaded with Taber that announcement of a cutback in funds would comfort the enemy. When Taber finally agreed, there were audible sighs of relief.

Then there transpired one of the most fascinating fiscal arrangements on record. After a quiet conference with the White House, Taber agreed

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to restore the full funds if the government would promise, honor bright, not to spend the three million dollars, but merely announce the sum for propaganda purposes.

The promise was kept.

'Taberizing'

John Taber's official biography in the *Congressional Directory* is a model of parsimonious prose in a wind-blown field. In fifty-seven words he admits to birth in Auburn, New York, in 1880, a Yale degree, admission to the bar, marriage in 1929, election to the Sixty-eighth Congress, and continuous re-election. That is all.

In contrast, the index to the New York *Times* for 1947—the first year Taber became big political news—devoted about ten times as much space to listing in greatly abbreviated form the matters on which he had expressed himself during the year. The subjects ranged from Federally subsidized school lunches (he was against them) to civil-service workers (he was also against them).

Taber's views on Federal workers are well known: He believes there are too many of them, that they are overpaid, underworked, and probably subversive, and that they spend too much time drinking coffee in government cafeterias. But there is an indication that time may be mellowing Taber. In 1947, he called for a fifty per cent reduction in Federal jobs. He is currently asking for only a twenty per cent cut, and many of those affected are overseas and consequently not in anyone's Congressional district.

When the Eightieth Congress gave Taber control of the purse strings, he launched an attack on peddlers of government publicity on the grounds that they (1) were on the public payroll and (2) "threatened American liberty and the Freedom of the Press."

There was considerable justification for applying a pruning knife, but not Taber's ax. In the keen competition for public esteem (and appropriations dollars) one government agency was pitted against the next, and rival mimeographs seemingly operated around the clock, grinding out "news" releases redolent with self-praise.

Congressman Taber dislodged hundreds of government press agents and lent his name to a coined word. Publicity persons who suddenly found themselves jobless lamented that they had been "taberized."

But how well Taber succeeded will never be known. His withering fire leveled the front rank, but the press agents fell back, regrouped, and went underground. Directors of press information transformed themselves into such things as chiefs of morale media, copyreaders became co-ordinators of distribution, and writers soon were opinion analysts. Thus camouflaged, many escaped detection. As a result, no one, including the United States government, now knows how many press agents are on the Federal payroll.

Whether the classic battle between Taber and the government press agents will be resumed interests many persons who are not government press agents, although this time the conflict may be waged on more equal terms.

Total (and Item) Recall

John Taber's voting record in Congress qualifies him to be chief editorial writer for the Chicago *Tribune,* except for the fact that he neither writes nor speaks effectively. He places greater store in his ability to analyze complicated budgets speedily. It is said that Taber can recall specific money items in a fifty-page budget two years old, and his memory for keeping tabs on peregrinating bureaucrats is phenomenal. Since there is a constant flow of bureaucrats from dying agencies to newborn ones, this is a remarkable attribute.

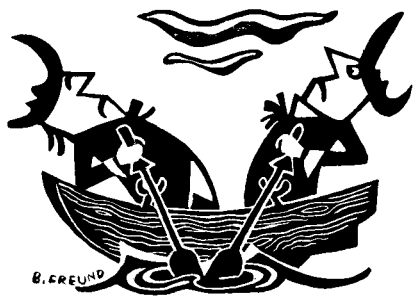
Taber's batting average with organized labor is .000. The AFL and CIO both compile score cards of Congressional voting on major issues, and Taber has not, within modern times, cast a vote that met labor's approval. Last session he voted against a five-dollar monthly increase in Social Security, for excluding 750,000 workers from Social Security benefits, against public housing, and for the lifting of rent controls. Earlier, Taber had voted against excess-profits taxes, against military aid for Korea, against the Point Four program, and in favor of protection for commodity speculators.

Once the money bills are passed, Taber's influence is nearly nil. He is one veteran Republican whose advice on grand strategy seldom is sought. Yet he remains the No. 1 strong man of the House.

This year Taber has given himself additional duties as chairman of the foreign aid subcommittee. Since his opinions on foreign aid are well known, the recommendations of this subcommittee can be forecast: They will be *against.* Taber, in fact, never saw eye to eye with the Marshall Plan; after a junket abroad he qualified himself as an ambassador of ill will by reporting that foreigners appeared to be almost as lazy and inefficient as civil-service workers.

As a minority member of the House Appropriations Committee, John Taber doubtless earned his salt by constantly reminding government spenders that the U. S. Treasury is not inexhaustible. But now that he has again quaffed the heady wine of authority and is committee chairman, his pinchpenny, mule-stubborn tactics may well mark the beginning of the first major schism in the Republican Administration.

For President Eisenhower's charm will never thaw the terrible-tempered Mr. Taber.



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The Joys Of Defeat

DOUGLASS CATER

To those who look for signs of change in the nation's capital, a visit to the Senate is not very helpful. Aside from the offshore oil dispute, recent events there might almost convince observers that the election had changed nothing. The attitudes of the two party leaders as they sit side by side are revealing: Robert Taft is still distraught and irritable, while Lyndon Johnson seems relaxed and placid. In trying to restrain his own party's recalcitrants, Taft has good reason for worry, whereas Johnson, in a spirit of good fun and political smugness, was recently able to assure President Eisenhower at a private gathering, "It's really been tough, Mr. President. We would like to be the loyal Opposition. We've had no trouble being loyal, but you have made it almost impossible to be Opposition."

Johnson and his colleagues have good reason for smugness, though their attainment of such euphoric heights in so short a time is rather surprising. But, as one estimable Democratic Senator said recently, "Now I can answer complaining constituents with three sweet little words, 'Blame the Republicans.'" To those who suffered the humiliations of the years when few Democratic Members of Congress dared stand up and defend the Truman Administration, such escape from responsibility must seem blessed indeed.

Contributing to the Democrats' sense of well-being is an increased spirit of party unity. In defeat the Democratic Senators have seemed to find that their differences are not as basic as their agreements. "It's a happy day when you can see Walter George and Mike Mansfield working hand in hand," party leader Johnson remarked the other day. "I don't know who has taken over whom, but I like it."

To make things even better, they have found this unity in being *for* rather than *against*. Already they can point to a steady procession of issues —the Reorganization Act, the anti-enslavement resolution, the Bohlen nomination, extension of the Reciprocal Trade Act, appropriations for public housing—which found them lined up solidly behind the President while the Republicans were split into warring factions. Except for occasional items such as the Hawaiian Statehood bill, which will probably rouse opposition from the Southerners, the prospects are that the Democrats may continue to offer a solid core of support for Presidential programs, especially in foreign policies. In a fit of braggadocio, one Democratic leader sent word to Eisenhower that if the President could muster at least five Republican Senators behind him, there were enough Democratic votes to assure a bipartisan foreign policy.

The Party Powerhouse Hums

On another front, relations between the staff of the Democratic National Committee and Members of Congress have reached a degree of friendliness unknown for some years. Chairman Stephen Mitchell, despite rumors of expected departure, appears to be firmly established for the remainder of this year at least, at which time he may leave office of his own accord. He and Deputy Chairman Clayton Fritchey, both recent comers to professional politics, have earned respect on the Hill by their manful efforts to make the party financially solvent and to furnish needed assistance to Congressmen. The research division, headed by Philip Stern, has performed amazingly well so far in providing Members with speech fodder and pertinent questions to be directed at the President's appointees.

There have been rumblings within the party, of course. Senator Richard Russell, who remains the pivotal member of the Southern wing, delivered a speech in Raleigh, North Carolina, late in February in which he spoke with considerable feeling against such political groups as Americans for Democratic Action which "stand with one foot in and one foot out of the Democratic Party and constantly threaten to pull out the foot they have in the party unless the entire party accedes to their demands." Intimates of Russell are inclined to minimize the seriousness of his disagreement; they point out that he subsequently sent word to the National Committee that it would be better if his speech were not broadcast.

Russell confided to a fellow Senator the other day that Hubert Humphrey, a member of the afore-mentioned A.D.A., is "one of the smartest men in the Senate." Reciprocally, Humphrey has proudly admitted that he has been working intimately and successfully with his party leaders in the Senate. If he or any of the other liberal Northern Democrats have thought of heeding Senator Wayne Morse's appeals to join him as Independents, they have given no sign by word or deed.

It is still early to forecast much about Democratic strategy for 1956, but already certain steps are being

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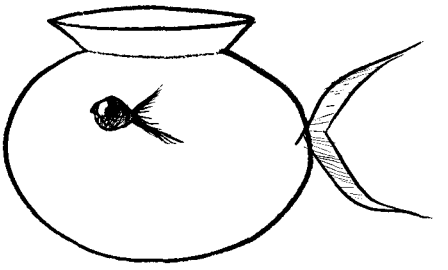
charted. A while back there was talk of a possible mid-term convention in 1954. Fearful Democrats were quick to point out all the possible dangers of such a gathering, devoted to the divisive aspects of the platform without the unifying quest for a candidate, and the idea seems to have been dropped.

When the 1956 Convention does come, there will be the troublesome matter of the loyalty requirement adopted at Chicago last summer. But various of the party's master conciliators have already begun to think about the possibilities of satisfying this requirement without offending anyone.

OF COURSE, the matter of candidates is barely entering the rumor stage. Adlai Stevenson, whose travels in distant countries have not so far dimmed his luster, is still the most talked about. Kefauver, who continues enthusiastic for the job, faces a really serious primary fight for re-election to the Senate next year. A recent starter who has gotten much attention of late is Stuart Symington, the freshman Senator from Missouri, who is quite an old-timer in Washington politicking. Symington, a man of smooth and determined ways, has been voting liberal but talking little except on mobilization matters. Reportedly, he might be a more acceptable compromise candidate to the Southerners than Stevenson. Certain of the McCarthy rooters have been spreading the prediction that the 1956 fight card will be McCarthy vs. Symington.

As the candidates' campfires begin to burn, new tensions within the party will increase. But many old tensions and old rancors seem to be fast fading. The image of Harry S. Truman, for example, may grow dimmer and sweeter. Even Dean Acheson may take on a new luster. The other day, a Southern Senator, who had not been known for his kindly attitude toward the Truman Administration, sent a hurried call to the Democratic National Committee. He wanted, he said, a good speech praising former Secretary Acheson and pointing out how the Eisenhower - Dulles Administration was simply building on the sound policies of its predecessors.

VIEWS & REVIEWS



Writer In a Cage

WILLIAM SAROYAN

PEOPLE from all over the world visit my office in Beverly Hills. My son, for instance, comes from New York, where he was born eight years ago. This trip to my office he makes from Malibu, on the Pacific Coast Highway, along the Pacific Ocean. He has been living there two months. (The front door of the Malibu house is on the highway, the back door on the ocean.) He doesn't actually come to my office, I bring him here. When he enters the office he goes to my desk and sits before my typewriter.

"I want to write a book," he says.

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

This is interesting because I have never urged him to take an interest in writing, as some writers with sons do. I have always believed in not crowding a man with his father's ideas, for a man's own may be better than his father's. My son has had many ideas about what he wants to do.

When he saw the nonchalant untidiness and strength of the Italian garbage collectors of San Francisco he wanted to be a garbage collector. When he saw the drivers of bulldozers leveling the sand dunes of San Francisco he wanted to be a driver of a bulldozer. When he saw the circus in Madison Square Garden he wanted to be a lion tamer. When he saw a comedian on television he wanted to be a funny man. When he saw a man walking with a gun and a dog in a field in Long Island he wanted to be a hunter. When he saw a ship at sea in a movie he wanted to be a seaman. When he saw a train go by he wanted to be an engineer. When he saw the ballet in San Francisco he wanted to be a garbage man again, but for a long time he has wanted to be a test pilot. "It's very dangerous," he once said in a hushed voice. "You don't live very long."

WELL, here is my son, at the typewriter at my desk in my office, saying now that he wants to write a book. He doesn't *think* about the matter. He goes straight to work, putting paper in the machine and typing.

He gets up from the typewriter suddenly, leaving the paper in the machine. He has written his book and forgotten it. He goes to the Pianola, starts it, and begins to shuffle around on the linoleum of the floor, purposely not smiling as he dances in a manner that is deliberately awkward for my amusement. When the piano roll ends, he comes over and picks up a book on my desk.

"What's this one?"

"Japanese."

"Can you read Japanese?"

"No, but I can look at the print. The book begins at the back and ends at the front."

He turns the book over in his hands. There he sees a photograph of myself.

"Is this *your* book?"

"Yes."

"Can you write Japanese?"

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"No. I wrote the book in English. A man in Japan who knows both English and Japanese put the English words into Japanese words. He translated the book."

"Do you know the man?"

"No."

"Why did he do it?"

"I guess he was hired by a publisher to do it. He was paid to do it."

"Why did the publisher pay him to do it?"

"Because the publisher wanted to print the book and sell it."

"Do you know the publisher?"

"No."

"Do you know *anybody* in Japan?"

"No."

"Well, Pop, if you don't know anybody in Japan, what's this all about?"

"It's not necessary for people to meet the writer of a book, or for the writer to meet the people who publish, translate, or read the book."

"How come?" he says, but he is busy examining some of the rocks I have gathered at the seashore and brought to my office because I have got to have rocks around all the time, and he isn't especially interested in the conversation. He's just talking, and so am I.

"Well, the book is the important thing," I tell him. "It has a life of its own. The writer *is* the book, of course, because he wrote it, but once the book is written the book has a life of its own."

He turns away from the rocks and goes back to the typewriter and looks at his book. He reads what he has tapped out on the typewriter.

"The Words of the Sea," he reads. "Seaweed. Anemone. Mussel. Clam. Silver perch. Octopus. Seal. Gull. Lobster. Slug." He stops. "Is this book any good?

"I think it is."

"I left out water."

"Well . . ."

"I left out a lot of stuff."

"You can't get everything into one book."

"Some day I'm going to be a writer too."

"Why?"

"I don't know," he says, "but I sure love the sea."

We talk until I finish the work I have come to the office to do, and then we get in my car and I drive back to Malibu, and we go into the house and out of it and straight to the sea, to the splatter of large and small black rocks there covered with life of all kinds but mainly mussels, and I see how he loves the sea. And while I can't guess if he is actually going to be a writer I know that if it happens he will be a pretty good one, from love of the sea.

BUT the office. What am I doing in an office in the first place?

Cages and offices have something in common, and a writer in an office is not unlike a gorilla in a cage. He soon finds that he has the lugubrious posture of a monkey animal, and the desperate loneliness of a creature with a strange and unattractive head and face. A writer in an office finds that his body bends forward, his arms grow longer, his legs shorter, the expression of his face more and more lugubrious.

The very appurtenances of an office are preposterous, especially the telephone. Every time I dial a number and speak over the telephone I have the feeling that this is something a gorilla in a cage is doing for the amazement of people at the zoo. "Notice how developed I have become. Notice the brilliant manual dexterity with which I work a dial telephone. Notice how I speak over the telephone so quickly and effectively. Notice how accurately I hang up."

One by one the visitors from all over the world come to the office-cage. The gorilla-writer gets up and smiles and almost says, "You came to see me!"

HERE, for instance, is another visitor, a man named Unger, swift, excited, full of plans, successful, ready to go from this cage to another where he will meet another animal.

He is pleased about the effective manner in which he conducted his affairs in Italy last year, and he is swiftly at work on plans for France.

"You are a great writer," he says.

To himself the writer says, "I *could* be, I suppose. But I don't understand it. What do you have to be to be great? Something ill?"

"You may not remember," the visitor says, "but we met in the Army. I was a Major. The Adjutant General's Office. You were in trouble. Behind the scenes I did many things for you because you are a great writer."

A little bored by now by his sudden greatness, the writer turns away from the visitor to look out the window, as an animal looks out of a cage. At the gasoline station across the street two men on one car and two on another are cleaning windshields, a very special kind of exercise in manual dexterity, a new labor entirely, performed millions of times a day by experts in gasoline stations. A good windshield cleaner can do his work in a way that compels admiration, but in the end beholding him in action becomes tiresome and sorrowing.

The visitor-Major is getting matters in order for the point of his visit, and the writer-gorilla, lonelier and more desperate than ever, knows that the point will be for the visitor to get something for nothing out of the writer, but the writer doesn't mind.

The writer discusses with the visi-

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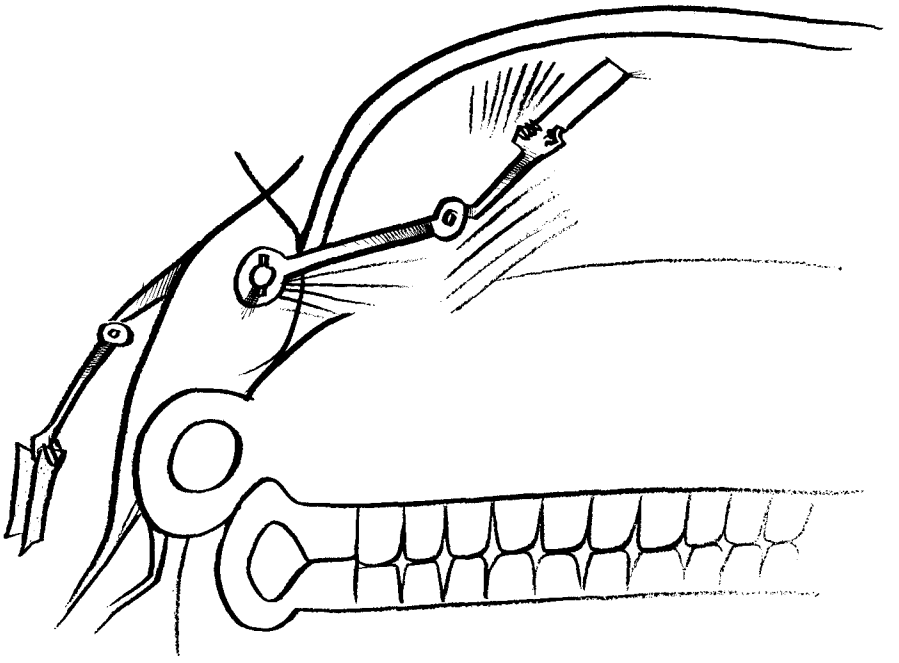


tor a book the visitor intends to use as the basis of a moving picture.

"I want you to do the screenplay," the visitor says. "I came all the way from Italy to find out if you would be interested in doing it, and I am so glad that you know the book and understand it so well. No other writer in the world can do this screenplay. It's your baby."

These words are deeply painful for the writer to hear, and for some reason he remembers the failure of the boat in Thompson Ditch in Fresno thirty-five years ago—the boat he and his brother had made of plaster laths, burlap, and tar; the boat they had worked on for more than a month; the boat they had lugged on foot nine miles on one of the hottest days of the year; the boat that did not float a minute.

The writer turns back to the visitor. "I don't write screenplays," he says.

"Well, whatever you choose to call them," the visitor says. "I want you to *adapt* this book for me."

"I wouldn't know how to do that."

"Let me ask you this," the visitor says. "Is it a matter of money?"

THE WRITER remembers his brother going down with the boat, refusing to the very end to believe in this swift failure of a noble idea. He remembers his brother sitting in the boat and sinking with it, disappearing under the water, and then swimming up and getting out of the water and standing on the bank of the ditch and looking where the boat had sunk.

"Can we get it out?" the writer asked his brother.

"No," his brother said. "It's full of water. It just didn't work, that's all."

The writer expected his brother to get mad, but all he did was smile a little. They had made great plans for that boat. They were going to put it on Kings River at Kingsburg and go along with the river for many days, floating easily downstream through the light of summer, with orchards and vineyards on either side of the river. They were going to have food and drink in the boat and they were going to fish and eat and drink and stop at night and camp. But the boat sank.

"Money?" the writer says. "What money?"

"I mean," the visitor says, "a writer's got to live, but I can't compete with Fox or Universal. Give me an outline of your idea of the book for a film, and I can assure you we will sign an agreement within twenty-four hours. If I like the outline I can let you have—oh, whatever you need for living expenses. And of course after you've done the screenplay we'll make a new agreement. I don't like the idea of writers not sharing in the profits. If the screenplay's great, as I'm sure it's going to be, I'll cut you in for a share of the profits."

"I don't know how to do work like that," the writer says. "I write original stuff only. I write books."

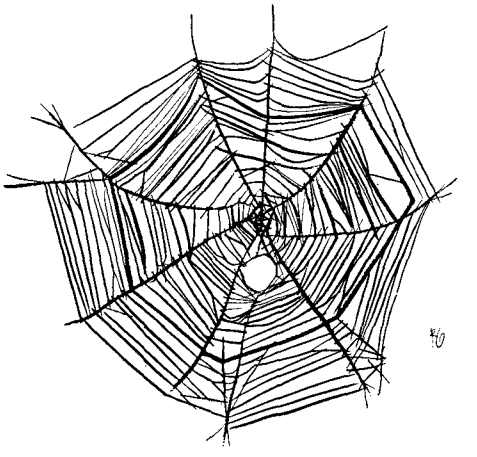
"Are you telling me?" the visitor says in a sharp, emphatic voice. "And what books! I've read every one of them, some of them two times, one of them three times—*Of Human Comedy.*"

"*Of Human Comedy,*" the writer says to himself. "*The Human Comedy*—I named it as a joke because Balzac called thirty or more books *The Human Comedy.*" He says nothing to the visitor about this, and the visitor goes right on talking about *Of Human Comedy.* What would a man like that call *Of Human Bondage?*

IN SPITE of all this, the writer is glad to have the visitor in his office. Anything to break it up a little. Anything to serve as an excuse to keep him from trying again to get to work and this time perhaps write something relevant, something worth writing, something quiet and meaningful at last.

The writer listens to the visitor almost an hour, and then the visitor gets up quickly to get along to another appointment.

"Think it over," the visitor says. "Give me a call in the morning. If you fall in love with the idea of writing the screenplay of a great moving picture, one of the greatest of all



time, then of course I shall be very happy, but if you don't fall in love with the idea, I wouldn't want you to do the screenplay. A writer has got to be in love with the work he is going to do."

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The visitor goes. The writer stands like a gorilla at the window, looking out at the boys in the gasoline station cleaning windshields.

THERE ARE other kinds of visitors, too. Dan Manfredo, for instance.

Day after day Dan comes to my office, sometimes early in the morning, sometimes late in the afternoon.

"You know," he says one day, "this is what I am going to do."

Then he stops speaking.

"What are you going to do?"

"Well," he says, "I had in mind saying I was going to live and die in a way that would mean something, but I can't figure out how to do that, so I'm going to go out and get a drink. Come on."

"I've got to wait for a phone call," the writer says. "Go out the back, up the alley, around to Pico, to Victor's, and get four cans of beer. Bring them here and we'll drink here."

When he is back with the beer he says, "Twenty years almost I've been a writer, and do you know I don't know the first thing about writing?"

"What are you *supposed* to know?"

"How to write," he says, "but I don't know how to. I never learned. I still don't know where to start. I don't even know *why* I want to write. I hate writing. I wish to God I was a fish."

"Why a fish?"

"Well," he says, "I was looking at that goldfish of yours in the bowl."

"That's my daughter's," the writer says. "I'm keeping it for her."

"How long do they live?"

"I don't know. I bought three of them for her three months ago. The other two died in a few days, but this one didn't."

"Nobody cares when goldfish die," Dan says.

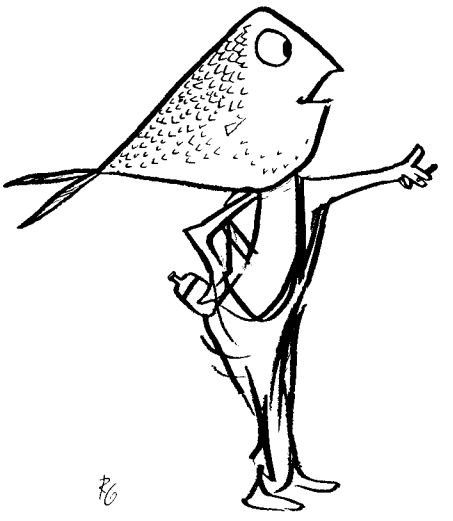
"Unless they know the goldfish," the writer says. "Then of course they *do* care. Even the dying of goldfish saddens those who know them. My daughter was stunned when the other two died. They are pretty and she loved them, and two of them died. She cried."

"Millions of living things die every minute," Dan says.

"Billions."

"It breaks the heart."

"There's nothing else for them to do, though."



"How do you mean?" Dan says. "Do you mean by the time they *must* die, they've done what they're supposed to do? Is that it? Even so, it breaks the heart. Little microscopic forms slipping around alive for a while and then dying."

"Why does *that* break the heart?"

"Because that's what *we* do, too," Dan says. "Slip around and die. I've slipped around a lot but never as much as now. I'm dying. I'm finished. I'll never know what it was all about. I'll never write anything worth anything."

"How do you know?"

"I can't write plots."

"What are plots?"

"Little designs of the slipping, that's what they are," Dan says, "and I just can't give the slipping any kind of form at all. That Balzac, what a son of a bitch he was, one plot after another, all the goldfish of Paris slipping around in the water of that bowl as if it meant something. I hate writers like that. They're the worst of the lot. The plot writers make it tough for all the other writers. What did you do with the dead goldfish?"

"Flushed them down the toilet."

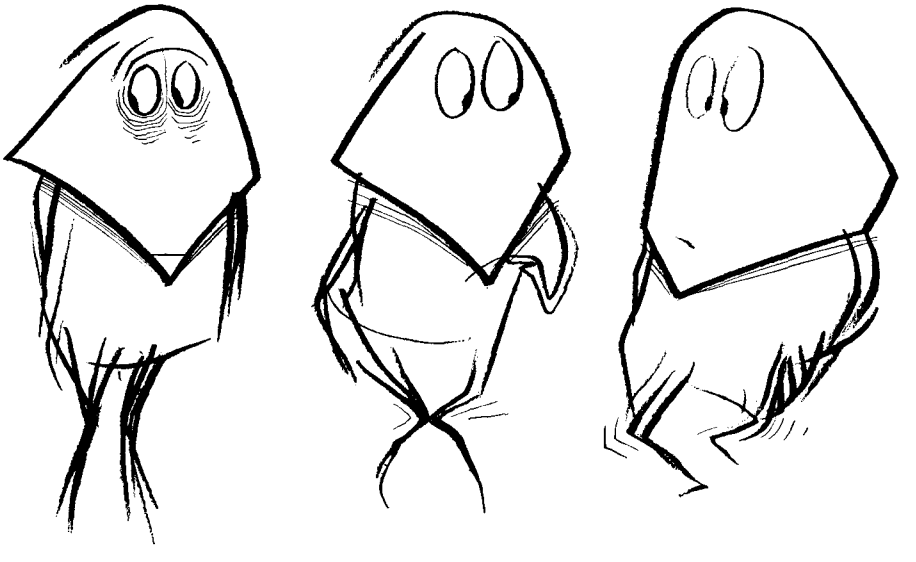
"Disgrace," Dan says. "Unholy. You should have buried them. I talked to Dreiser one time here in Los Angeles and all of a sudden there were tears in his eyes."

"Why?"

"He was telling me about his early years," Dan says, "and he happened to mention a girl he had loved who had died. Who knows why tears come to a man's eyes? I've got a character for a story that I think is very good. Everything that's supposed to make you cry doesn't bother *him* at all, but just let him see gladness of any kind, just let him see happiness of any kind, and he will turn his head away and cry softly and bitterly."

"How do you account for that?"

"I don't *have* to account for it," Dan says. "Besides, I get characters like that all the time. I never write them, though. They just occur to me, I think about them a minute, and then I forget them. I had a character once who might have changed the history of the world. This character was a very strong man. He was kind and intelligent, but he was afraid. I mean, he was afraid of *everything*, but the important thing about him was that he wasn't ashamed of being



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afraid. He spoke about it to everybody he knew, and they understood him perfectly because they were afraid too. He was humorous and God-loving, although he belonged to no church. I never wrote about him, but if I did, if I had been able to write a little novel about him, I think the story of mankind would never again be the same."

"Why don't you write a novel about him now?"

"I've got to make money," Dan says. "Besides, I got tired of him."

"Who was he? Yourself?"

"No, he wasn't myself," Dan says. "Everybody thinks every character a writer thinks of is himself. Well, this man wasn't myself. I'm not the kind of man who's afraid of everything. There are many things I'm *not* afraid of."

"What are they?"

"Oh, I'm afraid of my wife," Dan says. "Who wouldn't be? I've got a feeling she's violent somewhere deep inside. I get the idea every now and then that she's going to put poison in my coffee some morning and watch me die as we sit there and talk about the children. And of course I'm afraid of the children, too. I don't know what they're liable to do the minute they find out they're as strong as I am. People are dangerous, that's all, and most dangerous are the people nearest you. I'm not afraid of the people in China, I guess, but I'm not relaxed about the people in New York because they can get in an airplane and come out here and I might meet them. I might be in a bar drinking a glass of beer and the man and woman next to me have just come out in an airplane from Philadelphia. They're on their honeymoon, and the man's confused and the woman's anxious, and my elbow happens to touch the woman's elbow as I lift the beer for another sip. She spills some of her martini and turns to find out who did it. She finds out that it's me, a total stranger. She smiles. Her husband misunderstands, gives me a dirty look. I'm afraid of people."

"Everybody?"

"Everybody I run into," Dan says.

"Why?"

"Well," Dan says, "don't be a District Attorney. You know damn well why I'm afraid of them. They're afraid of me. They're justified in being afraid of me, too. Nobody trusts a man who's guileless. Everybody's afraid of a man who smiles, and that's *all* I do."

"What aren't you afraid of?"

"Little microscopic forms," Dan says, "slipping around in neat plots and dying. . . ."

Long-Playing Bonanza

HAROLD LAWRENCE

In 1947 a group of English sound engineers arrived in Rome with the mission of recording Verdi's *Aïda* in its entirety. All of their technical paraphernalia, including turntables, wax disks, and cutting heads, had been transported to Italy from England in large wooden crates. In those days, recording a complete opera was like directing traffic in Times Square at the rush hour—start-stop-start-stop. The work had to be recorded in installments of approximately four minutes. The slightest imperfection—a cough in the brass section, the conductor's baton striking a music stand, or a high B flat that didn't quite make it—necessitated remaking the disk, no matter how excellent the remaining three minutes and fifty-nine seconds of the take may have been. After each recording session, a plane took off from the Rome airport to fly the wax disks to England, where they had to be processed without delay.

A New Day

The advent of the long-playing record has made this hazardous and laborious procedure as outmoded as Guerry's single-flap shutter in photography. The mangled fingernails that accompanied the needle's relentless engraving of a 78-r.p.m. wax record are things of the past. An air of relaxation now prevails at recording sessions. The nerve-racking cutting of masters, or original disks, has been replaced by the recording of everything from squeaks to pear-shaped tones on strips of magnetic tape. After the session, the recording director edits the tape by cutting it into pieces, and then, using only the best passages, joins them together again to make a flawless recording. This bit of musical surgery, performed with the aid of a razor blade and Scotch tape, has made it possible, for example, to remove and replace single notes in a fast scale passage. The edited reels are then transferred to disks.

In five years, tape recording has already been used in recording over 150 complete operas, and more are on the way. Virtually all standard items in the classical repertoire have been served up to the music lover on long-playing records. *Nutcrackers, Boleros, Clocks,* and *Archdukes* are available in many delicious

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flavors. An average of a dozen versions of each Beethoven symphony adorn dealers' shelves.

When they reached the bottom of the barrel of standard repertoire, LP companies began to probe new musical territory. The results of their explorations are already apparent. Each month, dozens of musical works, a fair percentage of which will seldom, if ever, be performed in public, are making their recording debuts. Paradoxically, it is here that the LP era has made a unique contribution to the musical scene.

OBSCURE works by Schubert and Albinoni, Beethoven and Pfitzner, and Brahms and Quantz have made their appearances alongside the tried and true. Music by Mozart's father, Franck's teacher, Schumann's wife, and Haydn's brother have also found a microgroove in the growing LP repertoire.

We can now trace aurally the musical growth of a Chopin, Bartok, or Strauss. In the *Krakowiak* Rondo, for example, is a glimpse of the Polish composer as a youth. The work is far from being a masterpiece, but there is in it an unmistakable stamp of individuality. Strauss, out of Brahms, may be heard in a number of early works: the *Violin Concerto*, the *Symphony in F Minor*, and the *Wanderers Sturmlied*. These and many other formative composi-

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tions humanize the sometimes awesome figure of a master musician.

Where a conductor might chance the revival or premiere of a symphony lasting twenty-five minutes, an impresario would think twice before risking a necessarily huge investment in anything but a surefire production. And he would be fully justified in rejecting an opera that was bogged down in dull musical stretches, a static libretto, or both. Audiences attending performances of Cilèa's *L'Arlesiana*, Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz*, or Glinka's *A Life for the Czar* have to endure many arid minutes before coming upon the oases of musical inspiration.

Working on the assumption that even though an opera fails as a stage presentation it may have much to recommend it from a purely musical standpoint, the record companies have "restored" a number of these faded musical canvases.

THERE IS a point beyond which musical archaeology degenerates into a form of Collyer brothers' collection mania. Age alone does not make a violin great, a wine fragrant, or a musical work interesting. The lack of discrimination accompanying the flood of new recordings from all parts of the world is reflected in the pages of the expanding LP catalogue. Among the pieces of dead wood are such monstrosities as Liszt's *Battle of the Huns*, Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory* (*The Battle of Vittoria*), Dvorák's *The Midday Witch*, and Humperdinck's *Moorish Rhapsody*.

The record companies' new interest in unfamiliar repertoire since the advent of LP recording techniques might seem like the answer to a musicologist's prayer. But the layman, too, can fill in the background that lends depth and perspective to his appreciation of music.

Dr. Jamboree Takes the Stand

BILL MAULDIN

WELL, SIR, the powers that be finally saw the light and authorized a subcommittee to investigate the clergy, after all. And it's about time, too, or my name isn't H. Winthrop Jassack, assistant counsel to the subcommittee. Take this evangelist we hauled in today on subpoena, Dr. Jamboree. It was my pleasure to question him before Representative Veldt took over, and I submit the following transcript for your examination and conclusions.

Q. Is Jamboree your real name, Reverend?

A. Well, yes and no. It's really J. Amboree, but I always thought it sounded kind of nice to run the name together, since my tent meetings are noted for happiness.

Q. I see. It would be accurate, then, would it not, to say that you go about with a name other than your own?

A. If you want to put it that way.

Q. You say you meet in tents, sir.

A. That's right.

Q. Rather furtive sort of thing, eh? Here today and gone tomorrow.

A. I go where there are sinners to be saved. When I have given them the Word I go on to the next town. I expect the local pastor to keep them on the beam.

Q. Tell, us, Dr. Jamboree, what do you preach?

A. What I believe. I don't prepare sermons; I simply talk about what is on my mind.

Q. Well, then, please tell the subcommittee what you believe.

A. About what?

Q. About, say, the American way of life. Free enterprise.

A. I am against devotion to material things. I seek to drive the money-changers from the temple. A

man ought to put a tithe of his earthly goods into the collection plate to help support the good work and give some to the poor.

Q. Are you aware that your ideas are roughly parallel to the Communist line in regard to the distribution of wealth?

A. No. I thought the Russians gave everything to the government. I said give it to the poor.

Saving Jones or Spode

Q. Are you a loyal American?

A. Sure, I guess so. Never thought of asking myself before.

Q. Do you display the American flag at your meetings?

A. Didn't used to. Got into some trouble with the American Legion about it, though, a year or so ago up in Jersey. They had some local ordinance that said any gathering over five people had to display the flag. I always carry one around now for safety's sake.

Q. Do you believe there are many Communists among the clergy?

A. There are queer ducks in every line of work.

Q. Do you personally know any,

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er, colleagues who follow the party line in their preaching?

A. Well, sir, it already looks like you and I might not agree on what is the party line. What seems to me like doing God's work could look to you like downright treachery.

Q. I have here in my hand a photostat of a membership card in the Communist Party, number 99991899, made out to a "Jam B." Do you know anything about that?

A. No.

Q. We have it on what we consider reliable testimony that it is your card.

A. Wait a minute. I just remembered something. Was the fellow who told you that a short, heavy-set young man with red hair and glasses? Name of Jones or Spode or something like that?

Swapping Sermons

Q. You must realize we are not at liberty to divulge the identity of our informants.

A. Of course not. But I'll bet that's the fellow. Young kid, kind of worked up about something. He sat down front during a service in Baltimore not so long ago and kept heckling me until I told him if he had so much to say I'd let him take over the pulpit for a while. He wouldn't do that, but he stayed after the service and we sat up half the night preaching sermons at each other. He said revolution is the only way to cure the heathens and I said God prefers to work in gentler ways without all that bloodshed. I finally saw we weren't either of us getting any place by arguing, so I told him if he'd join my club I'd join his and that would settle it. I prayed with him and saved him and passed him the collection plate, and then he took my name down on a card and took his money back out of the plate for my initiation fee. I guess I must have done a pretty good job of salvation on him after all, eh?

Q. What do you mean by that?

A. Why, he came right over to work for you people, didn't he?

Q. That will be all for the moment, Reverend.

A. Thank you, son. And whenever you get ready to renounce this life of sin and folly yourself, drop me a line. You know where to reach me.

Why have there been no other TVA's?

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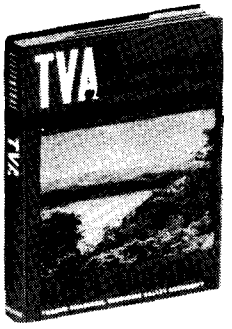

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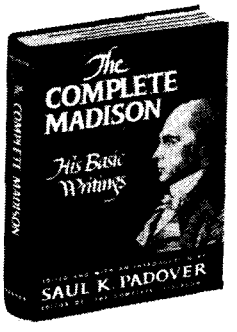

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CHANNELS:

Comments on TV

MARYA MANNES

CLOSE ON SOCRATES. MOTIONLESS. DEAD. CRITO BENDS DOWN, STROKES HIS BROW, KISSES HIS FOREHEAD LIGHTLY, AND SLOWLY COVERS HIS FACE AS THE CAMERA STARTS TO PULL AWAY.

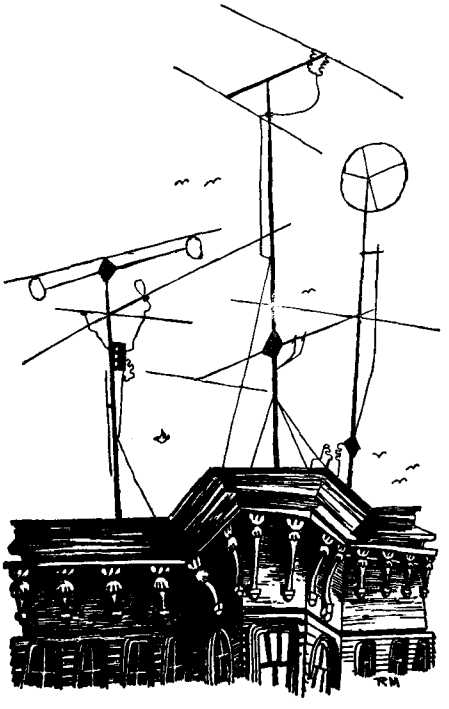
WALTER CRONKITE'S VOICE:
Thus was the tragic end of Socrates, the barefoot philosopher of Athens, the first master of the method of dialectics in the search for truth. And this knowledge became the property of his friends as well as his enemies as man's quest continued through the ages for the meaning of freedom and justice and virtue and truth.

CLOSE ON CRONKITE.
Indeed Socrates did not know all the answers. No one man can know them all. Among his distinguished pupils, including Plato and Xenophon, there were those who in his name later did much evil and those who did much good. But in Athens that night, and the days following, in the homes and in the streets, on the steps of the Acropolis, and in the palaestra, there was a great sorrow. They could not but grieve for the loss of this stubborn old man, simple and gentle of soul and sharp and clear of mind, who would never let them rest in their comfort and vanity and ignorance. And they were forced to think better and deeper of the true dignity and noble aspirations of man beyond his strivings for luxury, wealth and power. The cup of poison then became in their minds a test and symbol of high principles and purity. And all who would live by such goals were bound for centuries after to taste again in some way this bitter brew. What kind of a day has it been? A day like all others which illuminate and alter our times. AND YOU WERE THERE.

THESE WORDS were spoken the other day, not in a university, not in a school, and not in a lecture hall, but over a commercial television network (CBS Sunday) to an audience of millions. The end of the program is quoted here to show what educational television can be: a moving, stimulating experience.

It is cited also as a beacon for those struggling to establish a system of noncommercial, educational stations in the best interests of the American people.

For the main trouble with educational television as it now stands is the word "educational." It is a word which sets up immediate and largely negative reactions in the public mind: boredom, indifference, the unpopular twinge of duty—possibly even of guilt. On the networks, "educational" is a dirty word; applied to programs it is the kiss of death. In any context, it is a dull name for an exciting goal: the awakening of mind and spirit through the most powerful means of communication yet known.



The first thing its proponents must do, then, is to change the name. Call it Elevision, or Edeo. Call it anything but what it is called now. The second thing its proponents must do is to work closely and humbly with those network professionals who have learned how to entertain while they inform, for no child or adult in the country will listen to an amateurish performance. Finally, the proponents must fight tooth and nail (as many are now doing) against commercial opposition, public apathy, and myopic politics to secure those channels and those hours of the day most suited to reach people when they are at home and free to listen. Enormous pressures are already being exerted to shunt noncommercial programs to frequencies which are unavailable to the majority of sets and to hours which are poor money-makers; in other words, to make Elevision the Cinderella of the networks.

If this happens, if television is allowed to continue the way it is—ninety per cent commercial exploitation to ten per cent public service (and that is a generous estimate)—we may easily become a nation of spiritual illiterates. There are now more than twenty-one million TV sets in the United States, each one—according to a very recent survey—tuned in on an average of *four hours a day*.

THE Federal Communications Commission has reserved 242 channels throughout the country for educational TV—about 11.5 per cent of the available frequencies. Licenses for these channels are being applied for by universities, school systems, state boards, and educational foundations.

The slow rate of application has been food for the opposition, who cry, "You see! there isn't enough demand!" or "Let the channels revert to commercial stations after the June 2 limit on filing." These are the same voices that cried out against public

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schooling, the same people who throw their hands upward in alarm before all visions of mass benefit or improvement.

There are other arguments: "They haven't got the know-how." "Where's the money coming from?" "Let the commercial stations do it—they're better equipped." Today these arguments may be valid, but not tomorrow. For what one university accomplishes this year on its channel, three more will attempt next year. Know-how will develop with experience. The money may be hard to get at first, but in time no state and no community will risk depriving its people of services proved vital elsewhere.

The signposts are already there. If history could be taught as CBS teaches it on "You Are There," we would in time have that sense of continuity without which no people can mature. If ethics, perspective, and honesty could be taught as Ed Murrow teaches them on "See It Now," we might become a calmer and wiser nation.

I WOULD call such programs as these educational: "Omnibus's" Lincoln documentary, its "Letters of Napoleon Bonaparte and Josephine," and Stokowski conducting a work of Benjamin Britten; the new "Johnny Jupiter" series on ABC Saturdays—a lesson in adult humor and sensibility; Maurice Evans's "Hamlet" of April 26 on NBC.

These are the lessons we need; these and a hundred more to help us how to think and how to live, how to be stimulated, not merely narcotized. The obstacles lie almost as much in the educators themselves as in public apathy or private greed. Scholastic jargon, classroom techniques, and such dryness as permeates the New York University English course on WPIX on Monday evenings will not advance the cause.

TV demands entirely new approaches, above all imaginations that are as visual as they are intellectual. If eye and ear are not captured, the mind will never be; and the hand will reach out to turn the knob to "Red Buttons" or "I Love Lucy"—good shows, but hardly the summit of human experience.

Another Old Man, A Different Sea

GOUVERNEUR PAULDING

THE HOUSE BY THE MEDLAR TREE, by Giovanni Verga. Translated by Eric Mosbacher. *Grove Press. $3.50.*

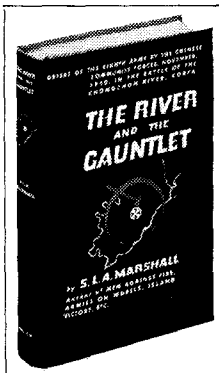
THE HOUSE BY THE MEDLAR TREE was published in Italian in 1881 and it is the story of a family in a fishing village in Sicily, but if a book is good it does not matter when it was written or in what language or where the action takes place.

When, in 1865, young Giovanni Verga left his native Sicily for Florence, the temporary capital of the new Italian state, and then for a ten-year stay in Milan, it was like when such Irishmen as John Millington Synge and William Butler Yeats somewhat later left Ireland for Paris. The Irishmen and the Sicilian had to go to centers where they would find people concerned with writing. Where they came from there were few people with whom they could talk.

Of course it is possible to talk oneself out and never do any writing at all, but it was talk, an immense amount of talk, a prodigious flow of solemn literary manifestoes and theoretical programs, a permanent seminar, that brought together the writing, the painting, and the social thinking of Europe's late nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth in their high level of purpose. Young Verga and the Irishmen came to town and joined in the talk. When they had talked enough and learned enough, they went back to their islands. The real work began.

The Sicilian Fisherman

Because Synge wrote his *Playboy of the Western World* and Yeats his *Deirdre* in English, we know the Irish accomplishment. No matter what their theories were, the Irish never had to work in Gaelic. Because Verga's people really spoke Sicilian and he had to translate their talk into Italian before it could be translated into English, few Americans know that he has done for Sicily what the great Irish writers did for Ireland—brought the humble people of his land into the enduring world of literature where there are neither Sicilians nor Irish, "neither Greek nor Jew," but only human beings yielding to their fate or mastering it,



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and always alone in the world under the stars at night. "The stars twinkled more and more brightly, as though they had caught alight . . . The sea murmured quietly at the end of the street, and at long intervals you heard the noise of a cart passing in the dark, bouncing over the stones, and going about the world, which is so big that if you walked and walked and walked and kept on walking for ever, day and night, you would never come to the end of it."

A great novel tells a story, of course, because a man is born and whatever he does before he dies is a story. A man is not a character sitting forever motionless under a tree, and even when a painter paints him he tries to show that the man who is there in the picture has come from somewhere and is going somewhere. But the story in a great novel serves only to explain the man who enacts it. A story can be desperately simple, and the story of *The House by the Medlar Tree* is so simple that it hardly seems worth retelling here. The story is simply that sometimes things go wrong, and there does not seem that there is any way out. A man is a fisherman—but not like Hemingway's fisherman, all alone—and a man has a family, children and grandchildren, and he has a house which he loves greatly with a medlar tree growing beside it—and things keep going wrong.

AT FIRST it was just that the fishing was bad, and then it was that his son was drowned and the man was in debt. And then it was that there were wars before the great wars we have known, and that on one occasion an Italian battleship blew up in a war that we have forgotten, and the old man's grandson was on the *Re d'Italia* and never came home. That was long ago and we Americans do not know what the particular war was about in which the new Italian nation was involved, and if we had been Sicilian fishermen, if we had been Grandfather 'Ntoni, we would not have known either: "Next day the news started going round that there had been a battle in the direction of Trieste between our ships and those of the enemy—nobody knew who the enemy was—and that many had been killed. Some said one thing and some another, and you had to make it out as best as you could from the bits and pieces you picked up."

There are accidents; old 'Ntoni has enough proverbs to explain any accident that happens in life, and he is willing to accept all the troubles that life can bring to a poor man who is in debt and never can manage to get out of debt. A poor man has to know how to stand grief and keep on working. If a family has honor it will stand together no matter what happens. A family that has honor will stand together to save the house in which it has always lived.

But there is that proverb about the one rotten apple; the family has to be absolutely united in its purpose. The old man would never have said that his other grandson, named after him 'Ntoni, was unworthy of the name, for he too was a brave man and a good fisherman. The Navy had taken him too. The whole village had gone to see him off with the other conscripts and they had feared that he would never come back, but he did—though not until he had seen the world.

That was the trouble. There was a world outside the Sicilian village and when you had seen the great buildings in its cities, the carriages, and the women dressed in bright silks who rode in the carriages, the house in which you were born no longer was an all-important thing to save, if to save it meant working all your life like the carter's mule. It would be then that a man would break the family code and bring final catastrophe. "So Master 'Ntoni was taken to the poorhouse in Alfio Mosca's cart. Alfio put a mattress and pillows in it for him, and the poor old man, though he said nothing, looked all round him as they helped him out of the house . . ."

The Undefeated

Among other things Giovanni Verga had picked up in Milan was the idea that men are conquered by forces of nature of which they know nothing and against which they are powerless. In the nineteenth century one either believed in progress or one was apt to indulge in despair. *The House by the Medlar Tree* was meant to be the first in a series to be called *I Vinti*, "The Defeated." But a great artist at work forgets his intellectual systems. The sea, poverty, and the forces of nature beat against old 'Ntoni, and he was defeated sure enough, according to plan. But when you read the book now—seventy-two years after it was written—it is only Verga's love that is visible; the pessimistic plan no longer shows. There is no defeat whatever.

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